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A
C O N F E S S I O N
OF
FAITH,
PUT FORTH

BY THE *ELDERS AND BRETHREN* OF MANY
CONGREGATIONS OF CHRISTIANS.

(Baptized upon Profession of their Faith)

IN LONDON AND THE COUNTRY.

Adopted by the *Baptist Association* met at *Philadelphia*,
September 25, 1742.

With two additional Articles, *viz.* Of Imposition of Hands,
and Singing of Psalms in Public Worship.

Philadelphia Baptist Association

THE NINTH EDITION.

With the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness, and with the
Mouth Confession is made unto Salvation, ROMANS x. 20.
Search the Scriptures, JOHN v. 39.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY STEPHEN C. USTICK.

Sold at No. 79, North Third St. and by the Baptist Ministers
in the United States.

1798.

WE the Ministers and Messengers of, and concerned for, upwards of one hundred baptized congregations in *England* and *Wales* (denying *Arminianism*) being met together in *London* from the third of the seventh month, to the eleventh of the same 1689, to consider of some things that might be for the glory of God, and the good of these Congregations; have thought meet (for the satisfaction of all other Christians that differ from us in the point of baptism) to recommend to their perusal the Confession of our Faith; printed for, and sold by *John Marshall*, at the *Bible in Grace-Church-Street*. Which Confession we own, as containing the doctrine of our faith and practice; and do desire that the members of our churches respectively do furnish themselves therewith.

Hanserd Knollys,
William Kiffin,
John Harris,
William Collins,
Hercules Collins,
Robert Steed,
Leonard Harrison,
George Barret,
Isaac Lamb,
Richard Adams,
Benjamin Keach,
Andrew Gifford,
Thomas Vaux,
Thomas Winnel,
James Hitt,
Richard Tidmarsh,
William Facey,
Samuel Buttal,
Christopher Price,

Daniel Finch,
John Ball,
Edmond White,
William Prichard,
Paul Fruin,
Richard Ring,
John Tomkins,
Toby Willes,
John Carter,
James Webb,
Richard Sutton,
Robert Knight,
Edward Price,
William Phips,
William Hankins,
Samuel Ezwer,
Edward Man,
Charles Archer.

In the name and behalf of the whole assembly.

To the Judicious and Impartial
R E A D E R.

COURTEOUS READER,

IT is now many years since divers of us (with other sober Christians then living, and walking in the way of the Lord, that we profess) did conceive ourselves to be under a necessity of publishing a *Confession* of our *Faith*, for the information and satisfaction of those, that did not thoroughly understand what our principles were, or had entertained prejudices against our profession, by reason of the strange representation of them, by some men of note who had taken very wrong measures, and accordingly led others into misapprehensions of us, and them: And this was first put forth about the year 1643, in the name of seven congregations then gathered in *London*; since which time, divers impressions thereof have been dispersed abroad, and our end proposed, in good measure answered, inasmuch as many (and some of those men eminent both for piety and learning) were thereby satisfied, that we were no way guilty of those heterodoxies and fundamental errors, which had too frequently been charged upon us without ground, or occasion given on our part. And forasmuch, as that *Confession* is not now commonly to be had, and also that many others have since embraced the same truth which is owned therein, it was judged necessary by us to join together in giving a testimony to the world, of our firm adhering to those wholesome principles, by the publication of this which is now in your hand.

And forasmuch as our method and manner of expressing our sentiments, in this, doth vary from the former (although the substance of this matter is the same) we shall freely impart to you the reason and occasion thereof. One thing that greatly prevailed with us to undertake this work was (not only to give a full account of ourselves to those Christians that differ from us about the subject of baptism, but also) the profit that might from thence arise, unto those that have any account of our labours, in their instruction and establishment in the great truths of the Gospel; in the clear understanding, and steady belief of which our comfortable walking with God, and fruitfulness before him, in all our ways, is most nearly concerned; and therefore we did conclude it necessary to express ourselves the more fully and distinctly; and also to fix on such a method as might be most comprehensive of those things we designed to explain our sense and belief of; and finding no defect in this regard, in that fixed on by the Assembly, and after them, by those of the congregational way, we did readily conclude it best to retain the same *order* in our present Confession; and also when we observed, that those last mentioned, did in their confessions (for reasons which seemed of weight both to themselves and others) chuse not only to express their mind in words concurrent with the former in sense, concerning all those articles wherein they were agreed, but also for the most part, without any variation of the terms, we did in like manner conclude it best to follow their example, in making use of the very same words with them both, in these articles (which are very many) wherein our faith and doctrine is the same with theirs, and this we did, the more abundantly, to manifest our consent with both, in all the fundamental articles of the christian religion, as also with many others, whose orthodox confessions have been published to the world, on the behalf of the *Protestants* in divers nations and cities: And also to convince all, that we have no itch to clog *Religion* with new words, but do readily acquiesce in that form of sound words, which hath been in consent with the *Holy Scriptures*, used by others before us; hereby declaring before God,

Angels, and *Men*, our hearty agreement with them, in that wholesome *Protestant Doctrine*, which with so clear evidence of scriptures they have asserted : Some things indeed, are in some places added, some terms omitted, and some few changed ; but these alterations are of that nature, as that we need not doubt, any charge or suspicion of unsoundness in the faith, from any of our brethren upon the account of them.

In those things wherein we differ from others, we have expressed ourselves with all candour and plainness, that none might entertain jealousy of ought secretly lodged in our breasts, that we would not the world should be acquainted with ; yet we hope we have also observed those rules of modesty and humility, as will render our freedom in this respect inoffensive, even to those whose sentiments are different from ours.

We have also taken care to affix texts of scripture at the bottom, for the confirmation of each article in our *Confession* ; in which *Work* we have studiously endeavoured to select such as are most clear and pertinent, for the proof of what is asserted by us : And our earnest desire is, that all into whose hands this may come, would follow that (never enough commanded) example of the noble *Bereans*, who searched the *Scriptures* daily that they might find out whether the things preached to them were so or not.

There is one thing more which we sincerely profess, and earnestly desire credence in, *viz.* That contention is most remote from our design in all that we have done in this matter : And we hope, the liberty of an ingenuous unfolding our principles, and opening our hearts unto our brethren, with the scripture-grounds on which our faith and practice will by none of them be either denied to us, or taken ill from us. Our whole design is accomplished if we may obtain that justice, as to be measured in our principles and practice, and the judgment of both by others, according to what we have now published ; which the Lord (*whose eyes are as a flame of fire*) knoweth to be the *Doctrine*, which with our hearts we most firmly believe, and sincerely endeavour to conform our lives to. And oh that other

contentions being laid asleep, the only *care* and *contention* of all, upon *whom* the name of our *blessed Redeemer* is called, might for the future be, to walk humbly with their God, in the exercise of all *love* and *meekness* towards each other to perfect holiness in the fear of the *Lord*, each one endeavouring to have his conversation such as becometh the *gospel*; and also suitable to his place and capacity, vigorously to promote in others the practice of true religion, and undefiled in the sight of *God* our *Father*. And that in this back-sliding day, we might not spend our breath in fruitless complaints of the evils of others, but may every one begin at home, to reform in the first place our own hearts and ways, and then to quicken all, that we may have influence upon, to the same *work*; that if the will of God were so, none might deceive themselves by resting in, and trusting to a form of godliness, without the *power* of it, and inward experience of the efficacy of those truths that are professed by them.

And verily there is one spring and cause of the decay of religion in our day, which we cannot but touch upon, and earnestly urge a redress of, and that is the neglect of the worship of God in families, by those to whom the charge and conduct of them is committed. May not the gross ignorance and instability of many, with the profaneness of others, be justly charged upon their parents and masters who have not trained them up in the *way* wherein they ought to walk when they were young? But have neglected those frequent and solemn commands which the Lord hath laid upon them so to catechise and instruct them, that their tender years might be seasoned with the *knowledge* of the truth of God, as revealed in the scriptures; and also by their own omission of prayer, and other duties of religion of their families, together with the ill example of their loose conversation, have injured them first to a neglect, and then contempt of all piety and religion; we know this will not excuse the *blindness* and *wickedness* of any; but certainly it *will* fall heavy upon those that have been thus the occasion thereof; they indeed die in their sins, but will not their blood be required of those under whose care they were,

who yet permitted them to go on without *warning*, yea, led them into the paths of destruction? and will not the diligence of Christians, *with* respect to the discharge of these duties, in ages past, rise up in judgment against, and condemn many of those who would be esteemed such now?

We shall conclude with our earnest prayer, That the God of all grace, will pour out those measures of his holy spirit upon us, that the profession of truth may be accompanied with the sound belief, and diligent practice of it by us, that his name may in all things be glorified, through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen.



A
C O N F E S S I O N

OF

FAITH.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Holy Scriptures.

THE Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible (*a*) rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience; although the (*b*) light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men unexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and his will, which is necessary unto salvation. (*c*) Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church; and afterward for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment, and comfort of the church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan, and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto (*d*) writing; which maketh the holy scriptures to be most necessary, those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.

(*a*) 2 Timothy iii. 15, 16, 17. Isaiah viii. 20. Luke xvi. 29, 31. Eph. i. 9, 10. ii. 20. (*b*) Romans i. 19, 20, 21, ii. 14, 15, Psalm xlv. 7, 8, 9. (*c*) Hebrews i. 1. (*d*) Proverbs xxii. 19, 20, 21. Romans xv. 4. 2 Peter i. 19, 20.

2. Under the name of holy scripture, or the word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these :

Of the Old Testament.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zachariah, Malachi.

Of the New Testament.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, The Acts of the Apostles, Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, to Titus, to Philemon, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of James, the first and second Epistles of Peter, the first, second, and third Epistles of John, the Epistle of Jude, the Revelation. All which are given by the (e) inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.

3. The books commonly called *Apocrypha*, not being of (f) divine inspiration, are no part of the canon (or rule) of the scripture, and therefore are of no authority to the church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of than other human writings.

4. The authority of the holy scripture, for which it ought to be believed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man, or church, but wholly upon (g) God, (who is Truth itself) the author thereof; therefore it is to be received, because it is the word of God.

5. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church of God, to an high and reverent esteem of the

(e) 2 Timothy iii. 16. (f) Luke xxiv. 27, 44. Romans iii. 2.
(g) 2 Peter i. 19, 20, 21. 2 Timothy iii. 16. 2 Thessalonians ii. 13. 1 John v. 9.

holy scriptures; and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, and the majesty of the stile, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole, (which is to give all glory to God) the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, and many other incomparable excellencies, and intire perfections thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the word of God; yet notwithstanding, our (*b*) full persuasion, and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the holy spirit, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts.

6. The whole counsel of God concerning all things (*i*) necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down, or necessarily contained in the holy scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelation of the spirit, or traditions of men.

Nevertheless we acknowledge the (*k*) inward illumination of the Spirit of God, to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word, and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the church, common to human actions and societies; which are to be (*l*) ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the word, which are always to be observed.

7. All things in Scripture are not alike (*m*) plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so (*n*) clearly propounded, and opened in some place of scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of ordinary means, may attain to a sufficient understanding of them.

(*b*) John xvi. 13, 14. 1 Corinthians ii. 10, 11, 12. 1 John i. 2, 20, 27. (*i*) 2 Timothy iii. 15, 16, 17. Galatians i. 8, 9. (*k*) John vi. 45. 1 Corinthians ii. 9, 10, 11, 12. (*l*) 1 Corinthians xi. 13, 14. xiv. 26, 40. (*m*) 2 Peter iii. 16. (*n*) Psalm xix. 7. cxix. 130.

8. The Old Testament in (*o*) *Hebrew*, (which was the native language of the people of God of old) and the New Testament in *Greek*, which (at the time of writing it) was most generally known to the nations, being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore (*p*) authentical; so as in all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal unto them (*q*). But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have a right unto, and interest in the scriptures, and are commanded in the fear of God to read (*r*) and search them, therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation, unto which they (*s*) come, that the word of God dwelling (*t*) plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner, and through patience and comfort of the scriptures may hope.

9. The infallible rule of interpretation of scripture (*u*) is the scripture itself: And therefore when there is a question about the true and full sense of any scripture, (which is not manifold but one) it must be searched by other places, that speak more clearly.

10. The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest. can be no other but the holy scripture delivered by the Spirit, into which (*x*) scripture so delivered, our faith is finally resolved.

(*o*) Romans iii. 2. (*p*) Isaiah viii. 20. (*q*) Acts xv. 15. (*r*) John v. 39. (*s*) 1 Corinthians xiv. 6, 9, 11, 12, 24, 28. (*t*) Colossians iii. 16. (*u*) 2 Peter i. 20, 21. Acts xv. 15, 16. (*x*) Matthew xxii. 29, 23. Ephesians ii. 20. Acts xxviii. 23.

CHAPTER II.

Of God and of the Holy Trinity.

THE Lord our *God* is but (*a*) one only living, and true *God*; whose (*b*) subsistence is in and of himself, (*c*) infinite in being, and perfection, whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but himself; (*d*) a most pure Spirit, (*e*) invisible without body, parts, or passions, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, who is (*f*) immutable (*g*) immense, (*h*) eternal, incomprehensible, (*i*) almighty, every way infinite, (*k*) most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute, (*l*) working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, (*m*) for his own glory, most loving, gracious, merciful, long suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, (*n*) the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and withal most just, (*o*) and terrible in his judgments, (*p*) hating all sin, and will by no means clear the (*q*) guilty.

2. *God* having all (*r*) life, (*s*) glory, (*t*) goodness, blessedness, in and of himself, is alone in, and unto himself all-sufficient, not (*u*) standing in need of any creature which he hath made, nor deriving any glory from them, but only manifesting his own glory in, by, unto, and upon them,

(*a*) 1 Corinthians viii. 6. Deuteronomy vi. 4. (*b*) Jeremiah x. 10. Isaiah xlviii. 12. (*c*) Exodus iii. 14. (*d*) John iv. 24. (*e*) 1 Timothy i. 17. Deuteronomy iv. 15, 16. (*f*) Malachi iii. 6. (*g*) 1 Kings viii. 27. Jeremiah xxiii. 23. (*h*) Psalm xc. 2. (*i*) Genesis xvii. 1. (*k*) Isaiah vi. 2. (*l*) Psalm cxv. 3. Isaiah xlv. 5. (*m*) Proverbs xvi. 4. Romans xi. 36. (*n*) Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7. Hebrews xi. 6. (*o*) Nehemiah ix. 32, 33. (*p*) Psalm v. 5, 6. (*q*) Exodus xxxiv. 7. Nahum i. 2, 3. (*r*) John v. 26. (*s*) Psalm cxlviii. 13. (*t*) Psalm cxix. 68. (*u*) Job xxii. 2, 3.

he is the alone fountain of all being, (*x*) of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things, and he hath most sovereign (*y*) dominion over all creatures, to do by them, for them, or upon them, whatsoever himself pleaseth; in his sight (*z*) all things are open and manifest, his knowledge is (*a*) infinite, infallible, and independant upon the creature, so as nothing is to him contingent or uncertain; he is most holy in all his counsels, in (*b*) all his works, and in all his commands; to him is due (*c*) from angels and men, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience, as creatures they owe unto the Creator, and whatever he is further pleased to require of them.

3. In this divine and infinite Being there are three substences, (*d*) the Father, the Word, (or Son) and Holy Spirit, of one substance, power and eternity, each having the whole divine essence, (*e*) yet the essence undivided: the Father is of none neither begotten, nor proceeding, the Son is (*f*) eternally begotten of the Father, the Holy Spirit (*g*) proceeding from the Father and the Son, all infinite, without beginning, therefore but one *God*, who is not to be divided in nature and being, but distinguished by several peculiar, relative properties, and personal relations; which doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our communion with *God*, and comfortable dependance on him.

(*x*) Romans xi. 34, 35, 36. (*y*) Daniel iv. 25, 34, 35. (*z*) Hebrews iv. 13. (*a*) Ezekiel xi. 5. Acts xv. 18. (*b*) Psalm cxlv. 17. (*c*) Revelation v. 12, 13, 14. (*d*) 1 John v. 7. Matthew xxviii. 19. 2 Corinthians xiii. 14. (*e*) Exodus iii. 14. John xiv. 11. 1 Corinthians viii. 6. (*f*) John i. 14, 18. (*g*) John xv. 26. Galatians iv. 6.

CHAPTER III.

Of God's Decree.

1. **G**OD hath (*a*) *decreed* in himself, from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby is *God* neither the Author of sin, (*b*) nor hath fellowship with any therein, nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty, or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather (*c*) established, in which appears his wisdom in disposing all things, and power, and faithfulness (*d*) in accomplishing his *Decree*.

2. Although *God* knoweth whatsoever may, or can come to pass upon all (*e*) supposed conditions; yet hath he not *decreed* any thing, (*f*) because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions.

3. By the *Decree* of *God*, for the manifestation of his glory, (*g*) some men and angels are predestinated, or foreordained to eternal life, through *Jesus Christ*, to the (*h*) praise of his glorious grace; others being left to act in their sin to their (*i*) just condemnation, to the praise of his glorious justice.

4. These angels and men thus predestinated, and foreordained, are particularly, and unchangeably designed; and their (*k*) number so certain, and definite, that it cannot be either increased, or diminished.

(*a*) Isaiah xlv. 10. Ephesians i. 11. Hebrews vi. 17. Romans ix. 15, 18. (*b*) James i. 15, 17. 1 John i. 5. (*c*) Acts iv. 27, 28. John xix. 11. (*d*) Numbers xxiii. 19. Ephesians i. 3, 4, 5. (*e*) Acts xv. 18. (*f*) Romans ix. 11, 13, 16, 18. (*g*) 1 Timothy v. 21. Matthew xxv. 41. (*h*) Ephesians i. 5, 6. (*i*) Romans ix. 22, 23. Jude 4. (*k*) 2 Timothy ii. 19. John xiii. 18.

5. Those of mankind (*l*) that are pre-destinated to life, *God*, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in *Christ* unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love; (*m*) without any other thing in the creature as a condition or cause moving him thereunto.

6. As *God* hath appointed the elect unto glory, so he hath by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, fore-ordained (*n*) all the means thereunto, wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in *Adam*, (*o*) are redeemed by *Christ*, are effectually (*p*) called unto faith in *Christ*, by his Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith (*q*) unto salvation; neither are any other redeemed by *Christ*, or effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect (*r*) only.

7. The doctrine of this high mystery of pre-destination, is to be handled with special prudence and care; that men attending the will of *God* revealed in his Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their (*s*) eternal election; so shall this doctrine afford matter (*t*) of praise, reverence, and admiration of *God*, and (*u*) of humility, diligence, and abundant (*x*) consolation, to all that sincerely obey the Gospel.

(*l*) Ephesians i. 4. 9. 11. Romans viii. 30. 2 Timothy i. 9. 1 Thessalonians v. 9. (*m*) Romans ix. 13, 16. Ephesians ii. 9, 12. (*n*) 1 Peter i. 2. 2 Thessalonians ii. 13. (*o*) 1 Thessalonians v. 9, 10. (*p*) Romans viii. 30. 2 Thessalonians ii. 13. (*q*) 2 Peter i. 3. (*r*) John x. 26. John xvii. 9. John vi. 44. (*s*) 1 Thessalonians i. 4, 5. 2 Peter i. 10. (*t*) Ephesians i. 6. Romans xi. 33. (*u*) Rom. xi. 5, 6. (*x*) Luke x. 20.

CHAPTER IV.

Of Creation.

1. **I**N the beginning it pleased *God* the Father, (*a*) Son, and Holy Spirit, for the manifestation of the glory of (*b*) his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, to *create* or *make* the world, and all things therein, (*c*) whether visible, or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good.

2. After *God* had made all other creatures, he *created* (*d*) man, male and female, with (*e*) reasonable and immortal souls, rendering them fit unto that life to *God*, for which they were *created*, being (*f*) made after the image of *God*, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness; having the law of *God* (*g*) written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was (*h*) subject to change.

3. Besides the law written in their hearts, they received (*i*) a command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; which whilst they kept, they were happy in their communion with *God*, and had dominion (*k*) over the creatures.

(*a*) John i. 1, 5. Hebrews i. 2. Job xxvi. 13. (*b*) Romans i. 20. (*c*) Colossians i. 16. Genesis ii. 1, 2. (*d*) Genesis i. 27. (*e*) Genesis ii. 7. (*f*) Ecclesiastes vii. 29. Genesis i. 26. (*g*) Romans ii. 14, 15. (*h*) Genesis iii. 6. (*i*) Genesis i. 17. and iii. 8, 9, 10. (*k*) Genesis i. 26, 28.

CHAPTER V.

Of Divine Providence.

1. **G**OD the good *Creator* of all things, in *his* infinite power and wisdom, doth (*a*) uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, and things, from the greatest even to the (*b*) least, by *his* most wise and holy Providence, to the end for which they were *created*, according unto *his* infallible fore-knowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of *his* (*c*) own will; to the praise of the glory of *his* wisdom, power, justice, infinite goodness and mercy.

2. Although in relation to the fore-knowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass (*d*) immutably and infallibly; so that there is not any thing befalls any (*e*) by chance or without *his* Providence; yet by the same Providence he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes, either (*f*) necessarily, freely, or contingently.

3. God in *his* ordinary Providence (*g*) maketh use of means; yet is free (*h*) to work without, (*i*) above, and (*k*) against them at *his* pleasure.

4. The Almighty power, unfearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in *his* Providence, that *his* determinate counsel (*l*) extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions both of angels and men; (and that not by a bare permission) which also he most wisely and powerfully (*m*) boundeth,

(*a*) Hebrews i. 3. Job xxxviii. 11. Isaiah xlii. 10, 11. Psalm xlii. 5, 6. (*b*) Matthew x. 26, 30, 31. (*c*) Ephesians i. 11. (*d*) Acts ii. 23. (*e*) Proverbs xvi. 33. (*f*) Genesis viii. 22. (*g*) Acts xxvii. 31, 44. Isaiah lv. 10, 11. (*h*) Hosea i. 7. (*i*) Romans iv. 19, 20, 21. (*k*) Daniel iii. 27. (*l*) Romans xi. 32, 33, 34. 2 Samuel xxiv. 1. 1 Chronicles xxi. 1. (*m*) 2 Kings xix. 28. Psalm lxxvi. 10.

and otherwise ordereth, and governeth, in a manifold dispensation to his most holy (*n*) ends: yet so, as the sinfulness of their acts proceedeth only from the creatures, and not from *God*; who being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be, the author or (*o*) approver of sin.

5. The most wise, righteous, and gracious *God*, doth oftentimes leave for a season his own children to manifold temptations, and the corruptions of their own hearts, to chastise them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption, and deceitfulness of their hearts, (*p*) that they may be humbled; and to raise them to a more close and constant dependance for their support upon himself, and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of sin, and for other just and holy ends.

So that whatsoever befalls any of his elect is by his appointment, for his glory, (*q*) and their good.

6. As for those wicked and ungodly men, whom *God* as a righteous judge, for former sin doth (*r*) blind and harden; from them he not only withholdeth his (*s*) grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understanding, and wrought upon in their hearts; but sometimes also withdraweth (*t*) the gifts which they had, and exposeth them to such (*u*) objects as their *corruptions* make occasion of sin; and withal, (*x*) gives them over to their own lusts, and temptations of the world, and the power of Satan, whereby it comes to pass, that they (*y*) harden themselves, even under those means which *God* useth for the softening of others.

7. As the *Providence* of *God* doth in general reach to all creatures, so after a more special manner it taketh care

(*n*) Genesis i. 26. Isaiah x. 6, 7. 12. (*o*) Psalm i. 21. John ii. 16.
 (*p*) 2 Chronicles xxxii. 25, 26, 31. 2 Samuel xxiv. 1. 2 Corinthians xii. 7, 8, 9. (*q*) Romans viii. 28. (*r*) Romans i. 24, 25, 28. and xi. 7, 8. (*s*) Deuteronomy xxix. 4. (*t*) Matthew xiii. 12.
 (*u*) Deuteronomy ii. 30. 2 Kings viii. 1, 13. (*x*) Psalm lxxxi. 11, 12. 2 Thessalonians ii. 10, 11, 12. (*y*) Exodus viii. 15, 32. Malah vi. 9, 10. 1 Peter ii. 7, 8.

of his (z) *Church*, and disposeth of all things to the good thereof.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and of the Punishment thereof.

I. **ALTHOUGH** *God* created man upright, and perfect, and gave him a righteous law, which had been unto life had he kept it, (a) and threatened death upon the breach thereof; yet he did not long abide in this honour; (b) satan using the subtilty of the serpent to seduce *Eve*, then by her seducing *Adam*, who without any compulsion, did wilfully transgress the law of their *creation*, and the command given unto them, in eating the forbidden fruit; which *God* was pleased according to *his* wife and holy counsel to permit, having purposed to order it, to *his* own glory.

2. Our first *Parents* by this *sin*, fell from their (c) original righteousness and communion with *God*, and we in them, whereby death came upon all; (d) all becoming dead in *sin*, and wholly defiled, (e) in all the faculties, and parts of soul and body.

3. They being the (f) root, and, by *God's* appointment, standing in the room, and stead of all mankind; the guilt of the *sin* was imputed, and *corrupted* nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation, being now (g) conceived in *sin*, and

(z) 1 Timothy iv. 10. Amos ix. 8, 9. Isaiah xliii. 3, 4, 5.

(a) Genesis ii. 16, 17. (b) Genesis iii. 12, 13. 2 Corinthians xi. 3.

(c) Romans iii. 23. (d) Romans v. 12, &c. (e) Titus i. 15. Genesis vi. 5. Jeremiah xvii. 9. Romans iii. 10—19. (f) Romans v. 12—19. 1 Corinthians xv. 21, 22, 45, 49. (g) Psalm li. 5. Job xiv. 4.

by nature children (*b*) of wrath, the servants of *sin*, the subjects (*i*) of *death*, and all other miseries, spiritual, temporal and eternal, unless the *Lord Jesus* (*k*) set them free.

4. From this original *corruption*, whereby we are (*l*) utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do (*m*) proceed all actual transgressions.

5. This *corruption* of nature, during this life, doth (*n*) remain in those that are regenerated: and although it be through *Christ* pardoned, and mortified, yet both itself, and the first motions thereof, are truly and properly (*o*) *sin*.

CHAPTER VII.

Of God's Covenant.

1. **T**HE distance between *God* and the *creature* is so great, that although reasonable *creatures* do owe obedience unto him as their *Creator*, yet they could never have attained the reward of life, but by some (*a*) voluntary condescension on *God's part*, which he hath been pleased to express, by way of *covenant*.

2. Moreover, *man* having brought himself (*b*) under the *curse* of the law by his fall, it pleased the *Lord* to make a *covenant* of *grace*, wherein he freely offereth unto *sinners* (*c*) life and salvation by *Jesus Christ*, requiring of them faith

(*b*) Ephesians ii. 3. (*i*) Romans vi. 20. and v. 12. (*k*) Hebrews ii. 14, 1 Theffalonians i. 10. (*l*) Romans viii. 7. Colossians i. 21. (*m*) James i. 14, 15. Matthew xv. 19. (*n*) Romans vii. 18, 23. Ecclesiastes vii. 20. 1 John i. 8. (*o*) Romans vii. 24, 25. Galatians v. 17. (*a*) Luke xvii. 10. Job xxxv. 7, 8 (*b*) Genesis iii. 17. Galatians iii. 10. Romans iii. 20, 21. (*c*) Romans viii. 3. Mark xvi. 15, 16. John iii. 16.

in him, that they may be saved; and (*d*) promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal life, his holy Spirit, to make them willing, and able to believe.

3. This *covenant* is revealed in the gospel first of all to *Adam* in the promise of salvation by the (*e*) seed of the woman, and afterwards by farther steps, until the full (*f*) discovery thereof was completed in the New Testament; and it is founded in that (*g*) eternal *covenant* transaction, that was between the *Father* and the *Son* about the redemption of the *elect*; and it is alone by the grace of this *covenant*, that all of the posterity of fallen *Adam*, that ever were (*b*) saved, did obtain life and blessed immortality; *man* being now utterly incapable of acceptance with *God* upon those terms on which *Adam* stood in his state of innocency.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of CHRIST the Mediator.

1. IT pleased *God*, in his eternal purpose, to chuse and ordain the *Lord Jesus*, his only begotten *Son*, according to the *covenant* made between them both, (*a*) to be the *Mediator* between *God* and *man*; the (*b*) prophet, (*c*) priest and (*d*) king; head and Saviour of his Church, the heir of all things, and judge of the world; unto whom he did from all eternity (*e*) give a people to be his seed, and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.

(*d*) Ezekiel xxxvi. 26, 27. John vi. 44, 45. Psalm cx. 3.
 (*e*) Genesis iii. 15. (*f*) Hebrews i. 1. (*g*) 2 Timothy i. 9. Titus i. 2. (*b*) Hebrews xi. 6, 13. Romans iv. 1, 2, &c. Acts iv. 12. John viii. 56. (*a*) Isaiah xlii. 1. 1 Peter i. 9, 10. (*b*) John vi. 14. (*c*) Hebrews v. 5, 6. (*d*) Psalm ii. 6. Luke i. 33. Ephesians i. 23. Hebrews i. 2. Acts xvii. 31. (*e*) Isaiah liii. 10. John xvii. 6. Rom. viii. 30.

2. The *Son of God*, the second person in the *Holy Trinity*; being very and eternal *God*, the brightness of the Father's glory, of one substance, and equal with *him*: who made the world, who upholdeth and governeth all things he hath made: did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon him (*f*) man's nature, with all the essential properties, and common infirmities thereof (*g*) yet without sin; being conceived by the *Holy Spirit* in the *womb* of the *Virgin Mary*, the *Holy Spirit* coming down upon her, and the power of the *Most High* overshadowing her (*h*) and so was made of a *woman*, of the *Tribe of Judah*, of the seed of *Abraham* and *David*, according to the *Scriptures*: so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, were inseparably joined together in one person, without *conversion*, *composition*, or *confusion*; which person is very *God* and very *man*, yet one (*i*) *Christ*, the only *Mediator* between *God* and *man*.

3. The *Lord Jesus* in his human nature thus united to the divine, in the person of the *Son*, was sanctified, and anointed (*k*) with the *Holy Spirit*, above measure; having in him (*l*) all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in whom it pleased the *Father*, that (*m*) all fulness should dwell; to the end, that being (*n*) holy, harmless, undefiled, and full (*o*) of *grace*, and *truth*, he might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of a *Mediator*, and (*p*) *surety*; which office he took not upon himself, but was thereunto (*q*) called by his *Father*; who also put (*r*) all power and judgment in his hand, and gave him commandment to execute the same.

4. This office the *Lord Jesus* did most (*s*) willingly undertake, which that he might discharge he was made under the law, (*t*) and did perfectly fulfil it, and underwent

(*f*) John i. 14. Galatians iv. 4. (*g*) Romans viii. 3. Heb. ii. 14, 16, 17. and iv. 15. (*h*) Luke i. 27, 31, 35. (*i*) Romans ix. 5. & Timothy ii. 5. (*k*) Psalm xlv. 7. Acts x. 38. John iii. 34. (*l*) Colossians ii. 3. (*m*) Colossians i. 19. (*n*) Hebrews vii. 26. (*o*) John i. 14. (*p*) Hebrews vii. 22. (*q*) Hebrews v. 5. (*r*) John v. 22, 27. Matthew xxviii. 18. Acts ii. 36. (*s*) Psalm -l. 7, 8. Hebrews x. 5—11. John x. 18. (*t*) Galatians iv. 4. Matthew iii. 15.

the (*u*) punishment due to us, which we should have borne and suffered, being made (*x*, *sin* and a *curse* for us; enduring most grievous sorrows (*y*) in his soul; and most painful sufferings in his body; was crucified, and died, and remained in the state of the dead; yet saw no (*z* *corruption*: on the (*a*) third day he arose from the dead, with the same (*b*) body in which he suffered; with which he also (*c*) ascended into heaven; and there sitteth on the right hand of his *Father* (*d*) making intercession; and shall (*e*) return to judge *men* and *angels* at the end of the world.

5. The *Lord Jesus*, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal *Spirit* once offered up unto *God*, (*f*) hath fully satisfied the justice of *God*, procured reconciliation, and purchased an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, (*g*) for all those whom the *Father* hath given unto him.

6. Although the price of redemption was not actually paid by *Christ*, till after his *incarnation*, (*) yet the virtue, efficacy, and benefit thereof was communicated to the elect in all ages successively, from the beginning of the world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices, wherein he was revealed, and signified to be the seed of the *woman*, which should bruise the serpent's head; (*b*) and the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world: (*i*) being *the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever*.

7. *Christ* in the work of *mediation* acteth according to both natures, by each nature doing that which is proper to itself; yet by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature, is sometimes in *Scripture* attributed to the person (*k*) denominated by the other nature.

(*u*) Galatians iii. 13. Isaiah liii. 6. 1 Peter iii. 18. (*x*) 2 Corinthians v. 21. (*y*) Matthew xxvi. 37, 38. Luke xii. 44. Matthew xxvii. 46. (*z*) Acts xiii. 37. (*a*) 1 Corinthians v. 3, 4. (*b*) John xx. 5, 27. (*c*) Mark xvi. 19. Acts i. 9, 10, 11. (*d*) Romans viii. 34. Hebrews ix. 24. (*e*) Acts . 42. Romans iv. 9, 10. Acts i. 11. (*f*) Hebrews i. 14 and x. 14. Romans iii. 25, 26. (*g*) John xvii. 2. Hebrews i. 5. (*) 1 Corinthians x. 4. Hebrews iv. . 1 Peter i. 10, 11. (*h*) Revelations xiii. 8. (*i*) Hebrews iii. 8. (*k*) John iii. 13. Acts xx. 28.

8. To all those for whom *Christ* hath obtained eternal redemption, he doth certainly and effectually (*l*) apply, and communicate the same; making intercession for them; uniting them to himself by his Spirit; (*m*) revealing unto them, in and by the word, the mystery of salvation; persuading them to believe, and obey; (*n*) governing their hearts by his word and Spirit, and (*o*) overcoming all their enemies by his Almighty power, and wisdom; in such manner and ways, as are most consonant to his wonderful, and (*p*) unsearchable dispensation; and all of free, and absolute grace, without any condition foreseen in them, to procure it.

9. This office of Mediator between *God* and man is proper (*q*) only to *Christ*, who is the prophet, priest, and king of the Church of *God*; and may not be either in whole, or any part thereof transferred from him to any other.

10. This number and order of offices is necessary; for in respect of our (*r*) ignorance, we stand in need of his prophetic office; and in respect of our alienation from *God*, (*s*) and imperfection of the best of our services, we need his priestly office, to reconcile us, and present us acceptable unto *God*: and in respect of our averseness, and utter inability to return to *God*, and for our rescue, and security from our spiritual adversaries, we need his kingly office, (*t*) to convince, subdue, draw, uphold, deliver, and preserve us to his heavenly kingdom.

(*l*) John vi. 37. x. 15, 16. and xvii. 9. Romans v. 10. (*m*) John xvii. 6. Ephesians i. 9. 1 John v. 20. (*n*) Romans viii. 9, 14. Psalm cx. 1. (*o*) 1 Corinthians xv. 25, 26. (*p*) John iii. 8. Ephesians i. 8. (*q*) 1 Timothy ii. 5. (*r*) John i. 18. (*s*) Colossians i. 21. Galatians v. 17. (*t*) John xvi. 8. Psalm cx. 3.

CHAPTER IX.

Of Free Will.

1. **G**OD hath indued the will of man with that natural liberty and power of acting upon choice, that it is (*a*) neither forced, nor by any necessity of nature determined to do good or evil.

2. Man in his state of innocency, had freedom, and power, to will, and to do, that (*b*) which was good, and well-pleasing to *God*; but yet (*c*) was mutable, so that he might fall from it.

3. Man by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost (*d*) all ability of will, to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, (*e*) and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to (*f*) convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.

4. When *God* converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, (*g*) he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin, and by his grace alone, enables him (*h*) freely to will, and do that which is spiritually good; yet so as that, by reason of his (*i*) remaining corruptions, he doth not perfectly nor only will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.

5. The will of man is made (*k*) perfectly and immutably free to good alone in the state of glory only.

(*a*) Matthew xvii. 12. James i. 14. Deuteronomy xxx. 19.
 (*b*) Ecclesiastes vii. 29. (*c*) Genesis iii. 6. (*d*) Romans v. 6. and viii. 7. (*e*) Ephesians ii. 1, 5. (*f*) Titus iii. 3, 4, 5. John vi. 44.
 (*g*) Colossians i. 13. John viii. 36. (*h*) Philippians ii. 13. (*i*) Romans vii. 15, 18, 19, 21, 23. (*k*) Ephesians iv. 13.

CHAPTER X.

Of Effectual Calling.

1. **T**HOSE whom *God* hath predestinated unto life, he is pleased in his appointed and accepted time (*a*) effectually to call by his Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation (*b*) by *Jesus Christ*; enlightening their minds, spiritually and savingly, to (*c*) understand the things of *God*; taking away their (*d*) heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining them (*e*) to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to *Jesus Christ*; yet so, as they come (*f*) most freely, being made willing by his grace.

2. This effectual call is of *God's* free and special grace alone, (*g*) not from any thing at all foreseen in man, nor from any power or agency in the creature, co-working with his special grace; (*h*) the creature being wholly passive therein, being dead in sins and trespasses, until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it, and that by no less (*i*) power than that which raised up *Christ* from the dead.

3. Elect infants dying in infancy, are (*k*) regenerated and saved by *Christ* through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and (*l*) how he pleaseth: so also are

(*a*) Romans viii. 30. and xi. 7. Ephesians i. 10, 11. 2 Thessalonians ii. 13, 14. (*b*) Ephesians ii. 1—6. (*c*) Acts xxvi. 18. Ephesians i. 17, 18. (*d*) Ezekiel xxxvi. 26. (*e*) Deuteronomy xxx. 6. Ezekiel xxxvi. 27. Ephesians i. 19. (*f*) Psalm cx. 3. Canticles i. 4. (*g*) 2 Timothy i. 9. Ephesians ii. 8. (*h*) 1 Corinthians ii. 14. Ephesians ii. 5. John v. 25. (*i*) Ephesians i. 19, 20. (*k*) John iii. 3, 5, 6. (*l*) John iii. 8.

all other elect persons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word.

4. Others not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the word, (*m*) and may have some common operations of the Spirit; yet, not being effectually drawn by the Father, they neither will, nor can truly (*n*) come to *Christ*; and therefore cannot be saved: much less can men that receive not the Christian religion (*o*) be saved, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the law of that religion they do profess.

CHAPTER XI.

Of Justification.

1. **T**HOSE whom *God* effectually calleth, he also freely (*a*) justifieth, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by (*b*) pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons, as (*c*) righteous; not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for *Christ's* sake alone; not by imputing faith itself the act of believing, or any other (*d*) evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness, but by imputing *Christ's* active obedience unto the whole law, and passive obedience in his death, for their whole and sole righteousness; they (*e*) receiving, and resting on him, and his righteousness by faith; which they have not of themselves; it is the gift of *God*.

(*m*) Matthew xxii. 14. and xiii. 20, 21. Hebrews vi. 4, 5: (*n*) John vi. 44, 45, 65. I John ii. 24, 25. (*o*) Acts iv. 12. John iv. 22. and xvii. 3. (*a*) Romans iii. 24. and viii. 30. (*b*) Romans iv. 5—8. Ephesians. i. 7. (*c*) I Corinthians i. 30, 31. Romans v. 17, 18, 19. (*d*) Philippians iii. 8, 9. Ephesians ii. 8, 9, 10. (*e*) John i. 12. Romans v. 17.

2. Faith thus receiving and resting on *Christ* and his righteousness, is the (*f*) alone instrument of justification: yet it is not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, (*g*) but worketh by love.

3. *Christ*, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are justified; and did by the sacrifice of himself, in the blood of his cross, undergoing in their stead the penalty due unto them, make a proper, real and full satisfaction (*h*) to *God's* justice in their behalf; yet, inasmuch as he was given by the Father for them, and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead, and both (*i*) freely, not for any thing in them, their justification is only of free grace, that both the exact justice and rich grace of *God* might be (*k*) glorified in the justification of sinners.

4. *God* did from all eternity decree to (*l*) justify all the elect, and *Christ* did in the fulness of time die for their sins, and (*m*) rise again for their justification; nevertheless they are not justified personally, until the Holy Spirit doth in due time (*n*) actually apply *Christ* unto them.

5. *God* doth continue to (*o*) forgive the sins of those that are justified; and although they can never fall from the state of (*p*) justification, yet they may by their sins fall under *God's* (*q*) fatherly displeasure; and in that condition, they have not usually the light of his countenance restored unto them, until they (*r*) humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.

6. The justification of believers under the Old Testament, was in all these respects (*s*) one and the same with the justification of believers under the New Testament.

(*f*) Romans iii. 28. (*g*) Galatians v. 6. James ii. 17, 22, 26. (*h*) Hebrews x. 14. 1 Peter i. 18, 19. Isaiah liiii. 5, 6. (*i*) Rom. viii. 32. 2 Corinthians v. 21. (*k*) Romans iii. 26. Ephesians i. 6, 7. and ii. 7. (*l*) Galatians iii. 8. 1 Peter i. 2. 1 Tim. 2. 6. (*m*) Romans iv. 25. (*n*) Colossians i. 21, 22. Titus iii. 4, 5, 6, 7. (*o*) Matthew vi. 12. 1 John i. 7, 9. (*p*) John x. 28. (*q*) Psalm lxxxix. 31, 32, 33. (*r*) Psalm xxxii. 5. and li. 7—12. Matthew xxvi. 75. (*s*) Galatians iii. 9. Romans iv. 22, 23, 24.

CHAPTER XII.

Of Adoption.

ALL those that are justified, *God* vouchsafed in and for the sake of his only *Son*, *Jesus Christ*, to make partakers of the grace (*a*) of *Adoption*; by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and (*b*) privileges of children of *God*; have his (*c*) name put upon them, (*d*) receive the *Spirit* of *Adoption*, (*e*) have access to the throne of grace with boldness; are enabled to cry, *Abba, Father*; are (*f*) pitied, (*g*) protected, (*h*) provided for, and (*i*) chastened by him, as by a Father; yet never (*k*) cast off, but sealed (*l*) to the day of redemption, and inherit the promises, (*m*) as heirs of everlasting salvation.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of Sanctification.

1. THEY who are united to *Christ*, effectually called, and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, through the virtue of *Christ's* death and resurrection; are also (*a*) farther sanctified, really and

(*a*) Ephesians i. 5. Galatians iv. 4, 5. (*b*) John i. 12. Romans viii. 17. (*c*) 2 Corinthians vi. 18. Revelations iii. 12. (*d*) Romans viii. 15. (*e*) Galatians iv. 6. Ephesians ii. 18. (*f*) Psalm ciii. 13. (*g*) Proverbs xiv. 26. (*h*) 1 Peter v. 7. (*i*) Hebrews xii. 6. (*k*) Isaiah liv. 8, 9. Lamentations iii. 31. (*l*) Ephesians iv. 30. (*m*) Hebrews i. 14. and vi. 12. (*a*) Acts xx. 32. Romans vi. 5, 6.

personally, through the same virtue, (*b*) by his word and Spirit dwelling in them; (*c*) the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, (*d*) and the several lusts thereof, are more and more weakened, and mortified; and they more and more quickened, and (*e*) strengthened in all saving graces, to the (*f*) practice of all true holiness, without which no man shall see the LORD.

2. This sanctification is (*g*) throughout in the whole man, yet imperfect (*b*) in this life; there abideth still some remnants of corruption in every part, whence ariseth a (*i*) continual and irreconcilable war; the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.

3. In which war, although the remaining corruption for a time may much (*k*) prevail, yet through the continual supply of strength, from the *sanctifying Spirit of Christ*, (*l*) the regenerate part doth overcome; and so the saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, (*m*) pressing after an heavenly life, in evangelical obedience to all the commands which *Christ*, as *head and king*, in his *word* hath prescribed to them.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of Saving Faith.

1. **T**HE grace of *faith*, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the *Spirit of CHRIST* (*a*) in their hearts, and is ordinarily

(*b*) John xvii. 17. Ephesians iii. 16—19. 1 Thessalonians v. 21, 22, 23. (*c*) Romans vi. 14. (*d*) Galatians v. 24. (*e*) Colossians i. 11. (*f*) 2 Corinthians vii. 1. Hebrews xii. 14. (*g*) 1 Thessalonians v. 23. (*h*) Romans vii. 18, 23. (*i*) Galatians v. 17. 1 Peter ii. 11. (*k*) Romans vii. 23. (*l*) Romans vi. 14. (*m*) Ephesians iv. 15, 16. 2 Corinthians iii. 18. and vii. 1.

(*a*) 2 Corinthians iv. 13. Ephesians ii. 8.

wrought by the ministry of the (*b*) word; by which also, and by the administration of *Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*, *prayer* and other *means* appointed of *God*, it is increased, (*c*) and strengthened.

2. By this *faith*, a Christian believeth to be true (*d*) whatsoever is revealed in the *word*, for the authority of *God* himself; and also apprehendeth an excellency therein (*e*) above all other *writings*; and all things in the *world*: as it bears forth the glory of *God* in his attributes, the excellency of *Christ* in his nature and offices, and the power and fulness of the *Holy Spirit* in his workings and operations; and so is enabled to (*f*) cast his soul upon the truth thus believed, and also acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the (*g*) commands, trembling at the (*h*) threatnings, and embracing the (*i*) promises of *God*, for this life, and that which is to come: but the principal acts of *saving faith*, hath immediate relation to *Christ*, accepting, receiving, and resting upon (*k*) him alone, for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.

3. This *faith*, although it be different in degrees, and may be weak, (*l*) or strong, yet it is in the least degree of it, different in the kind, or nature of it, (as is all other saving grace) from the faith (*m*) and common grace of temporary believers; and therefore, though it may be many times assailed and weakened, yet it gets (*n*) the victory, growing up in many, to the attainment of a full (*o*) assurance through *Christ*, who is both the author (*p*) and finisher of our *faith*.

(*b*) Romans x. 14, 17. (*c*) Luke xvii. 5. 1 Peter ii. 2. Acts ix. 32. (*d*) Acts xxiv. 14. (*e*) Psalm xix. 7, 8, 9, 10. and cxix. 72. (*f*) 2 Timothy i. 12. (*g*) John xv. 14. (*h*) Isaiah lxvi. 2. (*i*) Hebrews xi. 13. (*k*) John i. 12. Acts xvi. 31. Galatians ii. 20. Acts xv. 11. (*l*) Hebrews v. 13, 14. Matthew vi. 30. Romans iv. 19, 20. (*m*) 2 Peter i. 1. (*n*) Ephesians vi. 16. 1 John v. 4, 5. (*o*) Hebrews vi. 11, 12. Colossians ii. 2. (*p*) Hebrews xii. 2.

CHAPTER XV.

Of Repentance unto Life and Salvation.

1. **SUCH** of the elect as are converted at riper years, having (*a*) sometimes lived in the state of nature, and therein served divers lusts and pleasures, *God* in their *effectual calling*, giveth them repentance unto life.

2. Whereas there is none that doth good, and sinneth (*b*) not, and the best of men may, through the power and deceitfulness of their corruption dwelling in them, with the prevalency of temptation, fall into greater sins and provocations, *God* hath in the covenant of grace, mercifully provided that believers so sinning and falling, (*c*) be renewed through repentance unto salvation.

3. This saving repentance is an (*d*) evangelical grace, whereby a person, being by the *Holy Spirit* made sensible of the manifold evils of his sin, doth by faith in *Christ*, humble himself for it, with godly sorrow, detestation of it, and self-aborrancy; (*e*) praying for pardon and strength of grace, with a purpose and endeavour by supplies of the *Spirit*, to (*f*) walk before *God* unto all well-pleasing in all things.

4. As repentance is to be continued through the whole course of our lives, upon the account of the body of death, and the motions thereof; so it is every man's duty to repent of his (*g*) particular known sins, particularly.

5. Such is the provision which *God* hath made through *Christ* in the covenant of grace, for the preservation of believers unto salvation, that although there is no sin so

(*a*) Titus iii. 2, 3, 4, 5. (*b*) Ecclesiastes vii. 20. (*c*) Luke xxii. 31, 32. (*d*) Zechariah xii. 10. Acts xi. 18. (*e*) Ezekiel xxxvi. 31. 2 Corinthians vii. 11. (*f*) Psalm cxix. 6, 128. (*g*) Luke xix. 8. 1 Timothy i. 13, 15.

small, but it deserves (*b*) damnation; yet there is no sin so great, that it shall bring damnation on them that (*i*) repent; which makes the constant preaching of repentance necessary.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of Good Works.

1. **G**OOD works are only such as *God* hath (*a*) commanded in his Holy Word, and not such as without the warrant thereof, are devised by men, out of blind zeal, (*b*) or upon any pretence of good intentions.

2. These good works, done in obedience to *God's* commandments, are the fruits and evidences (*c*) of a true and lively faith; and by them believers manifest their (*d*) thankfulness, strengthen their (*e*) assurance, edify their (*f*) brethren, adorn the profession of the Gospel, stop the mouths of the adversaries, and glorify (*g*) *God*, whose workmanship they are, created in *Christ Jesus* (*h*) thereunto, that having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end (*i*) eternal life.

3. Their ability to do good works, is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the spirit (*k*) of *Christ*; and that they may be enabled thereunto, besides the graces they have already received, there is necessary an (*l*) actual influence of the same Holy Spirit to work in them to will and to do of his good pleasure; yet are they not here-

(*b*) Romans vi. 23. (*i*) Isaiah i. 16, 17, 18. and lv. 7. (*a*) Micah vi. 8. Hebrews xiii. 21. (*b*) Matthew xv. 9. Isaiah xix. 13. (*c*) James ii. 18. 22. (*d*) Psalm cxvi. 12, 13. (*e*) 1 John ii. 3, 5. 2 Peter i. 5—11. (*f*) Matthew v. 16. (*g*) 1 Timothy vi. 17. 1 Peter ii. 15. Philippians i. 11. (*h*) Ephesians ii. 10. (*i*) Romans vi. 22. (*k*) John xv. 4, 5. (*l*) 2 Corinthians iii. 5. Philippians ii. 13.

upon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty, unless upon a special motion of the Spirit, but they ought to be diligent in (*m*) stirring up the grace of *God* that is in them.

4. They who in their obedience attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life, are so far from being able to supererogate, and to do more than *God* requires, as that (*n*) they fall short of much which in duty they are bound to do.

5. We cannot by our best works merit pardon of sin, or eternal life at the hand of *God*, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come, and the infinite distance that is between us and *God*, whom by them we can neither profit, nor satisfy, for the debt of our (*o*) former sins, but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants: and because as they are good, they proceed from his (*p*) Spirit, and as they are wrought by us, they are defiled, (*q*) and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of *God's* judgment.

6. Yet notwithstanding the persons of believers being accepted through *Christ*, their good works also are accepted in (*r*) him; not as though they were in this life wholly unblamable and unreprouable in *God's* sight; but that he looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is (*s*) sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections.

7. Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them, they may be things which *God* commands and of good use, both to themselves and (*t*) others; yet because they proceed not from a heart purified by (*u*) faith nor are done in a right manner according to the (*v*) word,

(*m*) Philippians ii. 12. Hebrews vi. 11, 12. Isaiah lxiv. 7. (*n*) Job ix. 2, 3. Galatians v. 17. Luke xvii. 10. (*o*) Romans iii. 20. Ephesians ii. 8, 9. Romans iv. 6. (*p*) Galatians v. 22, 23. (*q*) Isaiah lxiv. 6. Psalm cxlii. 2. (*r*) Ephesians i. 6. Peter ii. 5. (*s*) Matthew xv. 21, 23. Hebrews vi. 10. (*t*) 2 Kings x. 30. 1 Kings xxi. 27, 29. (*u*) Genesis iv. 5. Hebrews xi. 4, 6. (*v*) 1 Cor. xiii. 1.

nor to a right end the (*x*) glory of *God*, they are sinful, and cannot please *God*, nor make a man meet to receive grace from (*y*) *God*; and yet their neglect of them is more sinful, and (*z*) displeasing to *God*.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of the Perseverance of the Saints.

I. **T**HOSE whom *God* hath accepted in the beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, and given the precious faith of his elect unto, can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace, (*a*) but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved seeing the gifts and callings of *God* are without repentance, (whence he still begets and nourisheth in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit unto immortality) and though many storms and floods arise and beat against them, yet they shall never be able to take them off that foundation and rock which by faith they are fastened upon: notwithstanding, through unbelief and the temptations of satan, the sensible sight of the light and love of *God*, may for a time be clouded, and obscured from (*b*) them, yet it is still the same, (*c*) and they shall be sure to be kept by the power of *God* unto salvation, where they shall enjoy their purchased possession, they being engraven upon the palm of his hands, and their names having been written in the Book of Life from all eternity.

(*x*) Matthew vi. 2, 5. (*y*) Amos v. 21, 22. Romans ix. 16. Titus iii. 5. (*z*) Job xxi. 14, 15. Matthew xxv. 41, 42, 43. (*a*) John x. 28, 29. Philippians i. 6. 2 Timothy ii. 19. 1 John ii. 19. (*b*) Psalm lxxxix. 31, 32. 1 Corinthians xi. 22. (*c*) Malachi iii. 6.

2. This perseverance of the saints, depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of (*d*) election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of *God* the Father, upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of *Jesus Christ* (*e*) and union with him, the (*f*) oath of *God*, the abiding of his Spirit, and the (*g*) seed of *God* within them, and the nature of the (*h*) covenant of grace ; from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.

3. And though they may, through the temptation of satan, and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of means of their preservation, fall into grievous (*i*) sins, and for a time continue therein ; whereby they incur (*k*) *God*'s displeasure, and grieve his Holy Spirit, come to have their graces and (*l*) comforts impaired, have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded, (*m*) hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments (*n*) upon themselves, yet they shall renew their (*o*) repentance, and be preserved, through faith in *Christ Jesus*, to the end.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation.

1. **ALTHOUGH** temporary believers, and other unregenerate men, may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes, and carnal presumptions, of being in the favour of *God*, and state of salvation, (*a*) which hope of

(*d*) Romans viii. 30. and ix. 11, 16. (*e*) Romans v. 9, 10. John xiv. 19. (*f*) Hebrews vi. 17, 18. (*g*) 1 John iii. 9. (*h*) Jeremiah xxxii. 40. (*i*) Matthew xxvi. 70, 72, 74. (*k*) Isaiah lxiv. 9. Ephesians iv. 30. (*l*) Psalm li. 10, 12. (*m*) Psalm xxxii 3, 4. (*n*) 2 Samuel 12, 14. (*o*) Luke xxii. 32, 61, 62. (*a*) Job viii. 13, 14. Matthew vii. 22, 23.

heirs shall perish; yet such as truly believe in the *Lord Jesus*, and love him in sincerity, endeavouring to walk in all good conscience before him, may in this life be certainly assured, (*b*) that they are in the state of grace, and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of *God*, which hope shall never make them (*c*) ashamed.

2. This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion, grounded upon (*d*) a fallible hope, but an infallible assurance of faith, founded on the blood and righteousness of *Christ* (*e*) revealed in the gospel; and also upon the inward (*f*) evidence of those graces of the spirit unto which promises are made, and on the testimony of the (*g*) Spirit of adoption, witnessing with our spirits, that we are the children of *God*; and, as a fruit thereof, keeping the heart both (*h*) humble and holy.

3. This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long; and conflict with many difficulties, before he be (*i*) partaker of it; yet being enabled by the Spirit, to know the things which are freely given him of *God*, he may, without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of means (*k*) attain thereunto; and therefore it is the duty of every one to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, in love and thankfulness to *God*, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, the proper (*l*) fruits of this assurance; so far is it (*m*) from inclining men to looseness.

4. True believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted; as (*n*) by negligence in preserving of it, by (*o*) falling into some special sin, which woundeth the conscience, and

(*b*) 1 John ii. 3, iii. 14, 18, 19, 21, 24. and v. 13. (*c*) Romans v. 2, 5. (*d*) Hebrews vi. 11, 19. (*e*) Hebrews vi. 17, 18. (*f*) 2 Peter i. 4, 5, 10, 11. (*g*) Romans viii. 15, 16. (*h*) 1 John iii. 1—3. (*i*) Isaiah l. 10. Psalm lxxxviii. and lxxvii. 1—12. (*k*) 1 John iv. 13. Hebrews vi. 11, 12. (*l*) Romans v. 1, 2, 5. and xiv. 17. Psalm cxix. 32. (*m*) Romans vi. 1, 2. Titus ii. 11, 12, 14. (*n*) Canticles v. 2, 3, 6. (*o*) Psalm li. 8, 12, 14.

grieveth the Spirit ; by some sudden, or (*p*) vehement temptation ; by *God's* withdrawing the (*q*) light of his countenance, and suffering even such as fear him to walk in darkness, and to have no light ; yet are they never destitute of the (*r*) seed of *God*, and life (*s*) of faith, that love of *Christ* and the brethren, that sincerity of heart, and conscience of duty, out of which, by the operation of the Spirit, this assurance may in due time be (*t*) revived ; and by the which, in the mean time, they are (*u*) preserved from utter despair.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of the Law of God.

1. **G**OD gave to *Adam* a law of universal obedience, (*a*) written in his heart, and a particular precept of not eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil ; by which he bound him, and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact and perpetual (*b*) obedience ; promised life upon the fulfilling, and (*c*) threatened death upon the breach of it, and indued him with power and ability to keep it.

2. The same law that was first written in the heart of man (*d*) continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness after the fall, and delivered by *God* upon Mount *Sinai*, in (*e*) ten commandments, and written in two tables, the four first containing our duty towards *God*, and the other six our duty to man.

(*p*) Psalm cxvi. 11. lxxvii. 7, 8. and xxxi. 22. (*q*) Psalm xxx. 7. (*r*) 1 John iii. 9. (*s*) Luke xxii. 32. (*t*) Psalm xlii. 5, 11. (*u*) Lamentations iii. 26—31. (*a*) Genesis i. 27. Ecclesiastes vii. 29. (*b*) Romans x 5. (*c*) Galatians iii. 10. 12. (*d*) Romans ii. 14, 15. (*e*) Deuteronomy x. 4.

3. Besides this law, commonly called moral, *God* was pleased to give to the people of *Israel* ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, (*f*) prefiguring *Christ*, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits; and partly holding forth divers instructions (*g*) of moral duties, all which ceremonial laws being appointed only to the time of reformation, are, by *Jesus Christ* the true Messiah, and only Law-giver, who was furnished with power from the Father for that end, (*h*) abrogated and taken away.

4. To them also he gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the state of that people, not obliging any now by virtue of that institution; their general (*i*) equity only being of moral use.

5. The moral law doth forever bind all, (*k*) as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof, and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the (*l*) authority of *God* the Creator who gave it; neither doth *Christ* in the gospel any way dissolve, (*m*) but much strengthen this obligation.

6. Although true believers be not under the law, as a covenant of works, (*n*) to be thereby justified or condemned, yet it is of great use to them, as well as to others, in that, as a rule of life, informing them of the will of *God* and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly; (*o*) discovering also the sinful pollutions of their natures, hearts and lives, so as examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin; together with a clearer sight of the need they have of *Christ*, and the perfection of his obedience: it is likewise of use to the regenerate, to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin; and the threatenings of it serve to shew what even their sins deserve,

(*f*) Hebrews x. 1. Colossians ii. 17. (*g*) 1 Corinthians v. 7. (*h*) Colossians ii. 14, 16, 17. Ephesians ii. 14, 16. (*i*) 1 Corinthians ix. 8, 9, 10. (*l*) Romans xiii. 8, 9, 10. James ii. 8, 10, 11, 12. (*l*) James ii. 10, 11. (*m*) Matthew v. 17—19. Romans iii. 31. (*n*) Romans vi. 14. Galatians ii. 16. Romans viii. 1. and x. 4. (*o*) Romans iii. 20. and vii. 7, &c.

and what afflictions in this life they may expect for them, although freed from the curse and unallayed rigour thereof. These promises of it likewise shew them *God's* approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof, though not as due to them by the law as a covenant of works; so as man's doing good; and refraining from evil, because the law encourageth to the one, and deterreth from the other, is no evidence of his being (*p*) under the law, and not under grace.

7. Neither are the forementioned uses of the law (*q*) contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it, the *spirit* of *Christ* subduing (*r*) and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully, which the will of *God*, revealed in the law, requireth to be done.

CHAPTER XX.

Of the Gospel, and of the Extent of the Grace thereof.

1. **T**HE covenant of works being broken by sin, and made unprofitable unto life, *God* was pleased to give forth the promise of *Christ*, (*a*) the seed of the woman, as the means of calling the elect, and begetting in them faith and repentance; in this promise, the (*b*) Gospel, as to the substance of it, was revealed, and therein effectual, for the conversion and salvation of sinners.

2. This promise of *Christ*, and salvation by him, is revealed only by (*c*) the word of *God*; neither do the works of creation, or providence, with the light of nature, (*d*) make discovery of *Christ*, or of grace by him, so much as in a general, or obscure way: much less, that men

(*p*) Romans vi. 12—14. 1 Peter iii. 8—13. (*q*) Gal. iii. 21.
 (*r*) Ezekiel xxxvii. 21. (*a*) Genesis iii. 15. (*b*) Revelations xiii. 8.
 (*c*) Romans i. 17. (*d*) Romans x. 14, 15, 17.

destitute of the revelation of him by the promise, or gospel, (*e*) should be enabled thereby, to attain saving faith, or repentance.

3. The revelation of the gospel unto sinners, made in divers times, and by fundry parts, with the addition of promises, and precepts, for the obedience required therein, as to the nations, and persons, to whom it is granted, is merely of the (*f*) sovereign will and good pleasure of *God*, not being annexed by virtue of any promise, to the due improvement of men's natural abilities, by virtue of common light received without it; which none ever did (*g*) make, or can so do: and therefore in all ages the preaching of the gospel has been granted unto persons and nations, as to the extending or limiting of it, in great variety, according to the counsel of the will of *God*.

4. Although the gospel be the only outward means of revealing *Christ*, and saving grace, and is, as such, abundantly sufficient thereunto; yet that men, who are dead in trespasses, may be born again, quickened or regenerated, there is moreover necessary, an effectual insuperable (*h*) work of the *Holy Spirit*, upon the whole soul, for the producing in them a new spiritual life; without which no other means will effect (*i*) their conversion unto *God*.

(*e*) Proverbs xxix. 18. Isaiah 25. 7. and lx. 2, 3. (*f*) Psalm cxlvii. 20. Acts xvi. 7. (*g*) Romans i. 18, &c. (*h*) Psalm cx. 3. 1 Corinthians ii. 14. Ephesians i. 19, 20. (*i*) John vi. 44. 2 Corinthians iv. 4, 6.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience.

1. **T**HE liberty which *Christ* hath purchased for believers under the gospel, consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of *God*, and rigour and (*a*) curse of the law, and in their being delivered from this present evil (*b*) world, bondage to (*c*) Satan, and dominion (*d*) of sin, from the (*e*) evil of afflictions, the fear, and sting (*f*) of death, the victory of the grave, and (*g*) everlasting damnation; as also in their (*h*) free access to *God*, and their yielding obedience unto him, not out of a slavish fear; (*i*) but a child-like love, and willing mind.

All which were common also to believers under the law (*k*) for the substance of them; but under the New Testament, the liberty of Christians is further enlarged in their freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law, to which the *Jewish* church was subjected, and in greater boldness of access to the throne of grace, and in fuller communications of the (*l*) free spirit of *God*, than believers under the law did ordinarily partake of.

2 *God* alone is (*m*) Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men (*n*) which are in any thing contrary to his word, or not contained in it. So that to believe such doctrines, or obey such commands out of conscience (*o*) is to betray true liberty of conscience; and the requiring of an (*p*) implicit

(*a*) Galatians iii. 13. (*b*) Galatians i. 4. (*c*) Acts xxvi. 18. (*d*) Romans viii. 3. (*e*) Romans viii. 28. (*f*) 1 Corinthians xv. 54—57. (*g*) 2 Thessalonians i. 10. (*h*) Romans viii. 15. (*i*) Luke i. 75. 1 John iv. 18. (*k*) Galatians iii. 9, 14. (*l*) John vii. 38, 39. Hebrews x. 19—21. (*m*) James iv. 12. Romans xiv. 4. (*n*) Acts iv. 19. and v. 29. 1 Corinthians vii. 3. Matthew xv. 9. (*o*) Colossians ii. 20, 22, 23. (*p*) 1 Corinthians iii. 5. 2 Cor. i. 24.

faith, and absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience and reason also.

3. They who, upon pretence of Christian liberty, do practise any sin, or cherish any sinful lust, as they do thereby pervert the main design of the grace of the Gospel, (*q*) to their own destruction, so they wholly destroy (*r*) the end of Christian liberty; which is, that, being delivered out of the hands of all our enemies, we might serve the *Lord* without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our lives.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day.

1. **T**HE light of nature shews that there is a *God*, who hath lordship and sovereignty over all; is just, good, and doth good unto all; and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served, with all the heart, and all the soul (*a*) and with all the might. But the acceptable way of worshipping the true *God*, is (*b*) instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of satan, under any visible representations, or (*c*) any other way, not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures.

2. *Religious worship* is to be given to *God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit*, and to him (*d*) alone; not to *angels, saints*, or any other (*e*) *creatures*; and since the fall, not without a (*f*) *Mediator*, nor in the *mediation* of any other but (*g*) *Christ* alone.

(*q*) Romans vi. 1, 2. (*r*) Galatians v. 13. 2 Peter ii. 18—21.
 (*a*) Jer. x. 7. Mark xii. 33. (*b*) Deut. xii. 32. (*c*) Exod. xx. 4, 5, 6. (*d*) Mat. iv. 9, 10. John vi. 23. Mat. xxviii. 19. (*e*) Rom. i. 25. Col. ii. 18. Rev. xix. 10. (*f*) John xiv. 6. (*g*) 1 Tim. ii. 5.

3. Prayer with thankfulness, being one special part of natural worship, is by *God* required of (*b*) all men. But that it may be accepted, it is to be made in the (*i*) name of the Son, by the help (*k*) of the Spirit, according to (*l*) his will; with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance, and, with others, in a (*m*) known tongue.

4. Prayer is to be made for things lawful, and for all sorts of men living, (*n*) or that shall live hereafter; but not (*o*) for the dead, nor for those of whom it may be known, that they have sinned (*p*) the sin unto death.

5. The (*q*) reading of the Scriptures, preaching, and (*r*) hearing the word of *God*, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts to (*s*) the *Lord*; as also the administration (*t*) of Baptism, and (*u*) the *Lord's* Supper, are all parts of religious worship of *God*, to be performed in obedience to him, with understanding, faith, reverence, and godly fear; moreover, solemn humiliation, (*x*) with fastings, and thanksgiving, upon (*y*) special occasions, ought to be used in an holy and religious manner.

6. Neither prayer, nor any other part of religious worship, is now, under the gospel, tied unto, or made more acceptable by any place in which it is (*z*) performed, or towards which it is directed; but *God* is to be worshipped every where in spirit, and in truth; as in (*a*) private families (*b*) daily, and (*c*) in secret, each one by himself, so more solemnly in the public assemblies, which are not carelessly, nor willfully, to be (*d*) neglected or forsaken, when *God* by his word or providence calleth thereunto.

(*b*) Psalm xcvi. 1, 7. Psalm lxxv. 2. (*i*) John xiv. 13, 14. (*k*) Romans viii. 26. (*l*) 1 John v. 14. (*m*) 1 Corinthians xiv. 16, 17. (*n*) 1 Timothy ii. 1, 2. 2 Samuel vii. 29. (*o*) 2 Samuel xii. 21—23. (*p*) 1 John v. 16. (*q*) 1 Tim. iv. 13. (*r*) 2 Tim. iv. 2. Luke viii. 18. (*s*) Col. iii. 16. Ephesians v. 19. (*t*) Mat. xxviii. 19, 20. (*u*) 1 Corinthians xi. 26. (*x*) Esther iv. 16. Joel ii. 12. (*y*) Exodus xv. 1, &c. Psalm cvii. (*z*) John iv. 21. Malachi i. 11. 1 Timothy ii. 8. (*a*) Acts x. 2. (*b*) Matthew vi. 11. Psalm lv. 17. (*c*) Matthew vi. 6. (*d*) Hebrews x. 25. Acts ii. 42.

7. As it is of the law of nature, that in general, a proportion of time, by *God's* appointment be set apart for the worship of *God*, so by his word, in a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men, in all ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a (e) sabbath to be kept holy unto him, which from the beginning of the world, to the resurrection of *Christ*, was the last day of the week; and from the resurrection of *Christ*, was changed into the first day of the week, (f) which is called the *Lord's* day; and is to be continued to the end of the world, as the Christian sabbath; the observation of the last day of the week being abolished.

8. The sabbath is then kept holy unto the *Lord*, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering their common affairs aforehand, do not only observe an holy (g) rest all the day, from their own works, words and thoughts, about their worldly employment and recreations, but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship and in the duties (h) of necessity and mercy.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of Singing of Psalms, &c.

WE believe that (a) *singing the praises of God*, is a holy ordinance of *Christ*, and not a part of natural religion, or a moral duty only; but that it is brought under divine institution, it being enjoined on the Churches of *Christ* to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; and that the whole church in their public assemblies (as well as

(e) Exodus xx. 8. (f) 1 Corinthians xvi. 1, 2. Acts xx. 7. Revelations i. 10. (g) Isaiah lviii. 13. Nehemiah xiii. 15, 22. (h) Matthew xii. 1—13. (a) Acts xvi. 25. Eph. v. 19. Col. 3. 16.

private Christians) ought to (*b*) sing *God's* praises according to the best light they have received. Moreover, it was practised in the great representative church, by (*c*) our *Lord Jesus Christ* with his disciples, after he had instituted and celebrated the sacred ordinance of his holy supper, as a commemorative token of redeeming love.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of Lawful Oaths and Vows.

1. **A** LAWFUL oath is a part of religious worship, (*a*) wherein the person swearing in truth, righteousness, and judgment, solemnly calleth *God* to witness what he sweareth; (*b*) and to judge him according to the truth or falseness thereof.

2. The name of *God* only is that by which men ought to swear; and therein it is to be used with all holy fear and reverence; therefore to swear vainly or rashly by that glorious and dreadful name, or to swear at all by any other thing, is sinful and to be (*c*) abhorred; yet as in matter of weight and moment, for confirmation of truth, (*d*) and ending all strife, an oath is warranted by the word of *God*; so a lawful oath being imposed, (*e*) by lawful authority, in such matters ought to be taken.

3. Whosoever taketh an oath, warranted by the word of *God*, ought duly to consider, the weightiness of so solemn an act, and therein to avouch nothing but what he knoweth to be the truth; for that by rash, false, and

(*b*) Hebrews ii. 12. James v. 13. (*c*) Matthew xxvi. 30. Mark xiv. 26. (*a*) Exodus xx. 7. Deuteronomy x. 20. Jer. iv. 2. (*b*) 2 Chronicles vi. 22, 23. (*c*) Matthew v. 34—37. James v. 12. (*d*) Hebrews vi. 16. 2 Corinthians i. 23. (*e*) Nehemiah xiii. 25.

vain oaths, the (*f*) *Lord* is provoked, and for them this land mourns.

4. An oath is to be taken in the plain and (*g*) common sense of the words, without equivocation, or mental reservation.

5. A vow, which is not to be made to any creature, but to *God* alone, (*b*) is to be made and performed with all religious care and faithfulness: but popish monastical vows, (*i*) of perpetual single life, professed (*k*) poverty, and regular obedience, are so far from being degrees of higher perfection, that they are superstitious, (*l*) and sinful snares, in which no christian may entangle himself.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of the Civil Magistrate.

1. **G**OD, the supreme *Lord*, and King of all the world, hath ordained civil (*a*) magistrates to be under him over the people, for his own glory, and the public good; and to this end hath armed them with the power of the sword, for defence and encouragement of them that do good, and for the punishment of evil doers.

2. It is lawful for christians to accept and execute the office of a magistrate, when called thereunto; in the management whereof, as they ought especially to maintain (*b*) justice, and peace, according to the wholesome laws of each kingdom and commonwealth: so for that end they may lawfully now under the New Testament (*c*) wage war upon just and necessary occasions.

(*f*) Leviticus xix. 12. Jeremiah xxiii. 10. (*g*) Psalm xxiv. 4. (*b*) Psalm lxxvi. 11. Genesis xxviii. 20—22. (*i*) 1 Corinthians vii. 2, 9. (*k*) Ephesians iv. 28. (*l*) Matthew xix. 11. (*a*) Rom. xiii. 1—4. (*b*) 2 Samuel xxiii. 3. Psalm lxxxii. 3, 4. (*c*) Luke iii. 14.

3. *Civil Magistrates* being set up by *God*, for the ends aforesaid, subjection in all lawful things commanded by them, ought to be yielded by us in the *Lord*, not only for wrath (*d*) but for conscience-sake; and we ought to make supplications and prayers for kings, and all that are in authority (*e*) that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of Marriage.

1. **MARRIAGE** is to be between one *man* and one *woman*; (*a*) neither is it lawful for any *man* to have more than one *wife*, nor for any *woman* to have more than one *husband* at the same time.

2. Marriage was ordained for the mutual help (*b*) of *husband* and *wife*, (*c*) for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue, and for (*d*) preventing of uncleanness.

3. It is lawful for (*e*) all sorts of people to *marry*, who are able with judgment to give their consent; yet it is the duty of *Christians* (*f*) to *marry* in the *Lord*; and therefore such as profess the true religion should not *marry* with infidels, (*g*) or idolaters; neither should such as are godly be unequally yoked, by *marrying* with such as are wicked in their life, or maintain damnable heresy.

4. *Marriage* ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity (*b*) or affinity, forbidden in the word; nor can such incestuous *marriage* ever be made lawful, by any law of man or consent of parties, (*i*) so as those persons may live together as *man* and *wife*.

(*d*) Romans xiii. 5, 6, 7. 1 Peter ii. 17. (*e*) 1 Timothy ii. 1. 2. (*a*) Gen. ii. 24. Malachi ii. 15. Matthew xix. 5, 6. (*b*) Gen. ii. 18. (*c*) Gen. i. 28. (*d*) 1 Corinthians vii. 2. 9. (*e*) Heb. xiii. 4. 1 Timothy iv. 3. (*f*) 1 Corinthians vii. 39. (*g*) Nehem. xiii. 25—27. (*b*) Leviticus xviii. (*i*) Mark vi. 18. 1 Cor. v. 1.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of the Church.

1. **T**HE Catholic or universal church, which, with respect to the internal work of the Spirit and truth of grace, may be called invisible, consists of the whole (*a*) number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under *Christ*, the head thereof: and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

2. All persons, throughout the world, professing the faith of the Gospel, and obedience unto *God* by *Christ*, according unto it, not destroying their own profession by any errors, everting the foundation, or unholiness of conversation, (*b*) are and may be called visible saints; (*c*) and of such ought all particular congregations to be constituted.

3. The purest churches under heaven are subject (*d*) to mixture, and error; and some have so degenerated as to become (*e*) no churches of *Christ*, but Synagogues of *Satan*; nevertheless *Christ* always hath had, and ever shall have a (*f*) kingdom in this world, to the end thereof, of such as believe in him, and make profession of his name.

4. The *Lord Jesus Christ* is the head of the church, in whom, by the appointment of the Father, (*g*) all power for the calling, institution, order, or government of the church, is invested in a supreme and sovereign manner, neither can the Pope of *Rome* in any sense be head thereof, but is (*h*) that Antichrist, that man of sin, and son of

(*a*) Hebrews xii. 23. Colossians i. 18. Ephesians i. 10, 22, 23. and v. 23, 27, 32. (*b*) 1 Corinthians i. 2. Acts xi. 26. (*c*) Rom. i. 7. Ephesians i. 20—22. (*d*) 1 Corinthians v. Revelations ii. and iii. (*e*) Revelations xviii. 2. 2 Thessalonians ii. 11, 12. (*f*) Matthew xvi. 18. Psalm lxxii. 17. and cii. 28. Rev. xii. 7. (*g*) Colossians i. 18. Matth. xxviii. 18—20. Eph. iv. 11, 12. (*h*) 2 Thessalonians ii. 2—9.

perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against *Christ*, and all that is called *God*; whom the *Lord* shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.

5. In the execution of this power wherewith he is so intrusted, the *Lord Jesus* calleth out of the world unto himself, through the ministry of his word, by his Spirit, (*i*) those that are given unto him, by his Father, that they may walk before him in all the (*k*) ways of obedience, which he prescribeth to them in his word. Those thus called, he commandeth to walk together in particular societies, or (*l*) churches, for their mutual edification and the due performance of that public worship, which he requireth of them in the world.

6. The members of these churches are (*m*) saints by calling, visibly manifesting and evidencing in and by their profession and walking, their obedience unto that call of *Christ*; and do willingly consent to walk together according to the appointment of *Christ*, giving up themselves to the *Lord* and one to another, by the will of *God*, (*n*) in professed subjection to the ordinances of the Gospel.

7. To each of these churches thus gathered according to his mind, declared in his word, he hath given all that (*o*) power and authority, which is any way needful for their carrying on that order in worship and discipline, which he hath instituted for them to observe, with commands and rules, for the due and right exerting and executing of that power.

8. A particular church gathered, and completely organized according to the mind of *Christ*, consists of officers and members: and the officers appointed by *Christ* to be chosen and set apart by the church, so called and gathered, for the peculiar administration of ordinances, and execution of power, or duty, which he intrusts them

(*i*) John x. 16. and xii. 32. (*k*) Matth. xxviii. 20. (*l*) Matth. xviii. 15—20. (*m*) Romans i. 7. 1 Corinthians i. 2. " Acts ii. 41, 42. and v. 13, 14. 2 Corinthians ix. 13. (*o*) Matthew xviii. 17, 18. 1 Corinthians v. 4, 5, 13. 2 Corinthians ii. 6—8.

with, or calls them to, to be continued to the end of the world, are (*p*) bishops, or elders and deacons.

9. The way appointed by *Christ* for the calling of any person, fitted and gifted by the Holy Spirit, unto the office of Bishop, or elder, in a church, is, that he be chosen thereunto by the common (*q*) suffrage of the church itself; and solemnly set apart by fasting and prayer, with imposition of hands of the (*r*) eldership of the church, if there be any before constituted therein: and of a deacon (*s*) that he be chosen by the like suffrage, and set apart by prayer, and the like imposition of hands.

10. The work of pastors being constantly to attend the service of *Christ*, in his churches, in the ministry of the word, and prayer, (*t*) with watching for their souls, as they that must give an account to him; it is incumbent on the churches to whom they minister, not only to give them all due respect, (*u*) but also to communicate to them of all their good things, according to their ability, so as they may have a comfortable supply, without being themselves (*x*) entangled in secular affairs; and may also be capable of exercising (*y*) hospitality towards others; and this is required by the (*z*) law of nature, and by the express order of our *Lord Jesus*, who hath ordained, that they that preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.

11. Although it be incumbent on the bishops or pastors of the churches, to be instant in preaching the word, by way of office, yet the work of preaching the word is not so peculiarly confined to them, but that others also (*a*) gifted, and fitted by the Holy Spirit for it, and approved and called by the church, may and ought to perform it.

12. As all believers are bound to join themselves to particular churches, when and where they have opportunity so to do; so all that are admitted unto the privileges of a

(*p*) Acts xx. 17, 28. Philippians i. 1. (*q*) Acts xiv. 23. See the Original. (*r*) 1 Timothy iv. 14. (*s*) Acts vi. 3, 5, 6. (*t*) Acts vi. 4. Hebrews xiii. 17. (*u*) 1 Timothy v. 17, 18. Galatians vi. 6, 7. (*x*) 1 Timothy ii. 4. (*y*) 1 Timothy iii. 2. (*z*) 1 Cor. ix. 6, 14. (*a*) Acts xi. 19—21. 1 Peter iv. 10, 11.

church, are also (b) under the censures and government thereof, according to the rule of *Christ*.

13. No church-members, upon any offence taken by them, having performed their duty required of them towards the person they are offended at, ought to disturb church order, or absent themselves from the assemblies of the church, or administration of any ordinance, upon the account of such offence at any of their fellow-members, but to wait upon *Christ*, (c) in further proceeding of the church.

14. As each church, and all the members of it, are bound to (d) pray continually, for the good and prosperity of all the churches of *Christ*, in all places, and upon all occasions to further it, every one within the bounds of their places and callings, in the exercise of their gifts and graces, so the churches, when planted by the providence of *God*, so as they may enjoy opportunity and advantage for it, ought to hold (e) communion among themselves, for their peace, increase of love and mutual edification.

15. Cases of difficulty or differences, either in point of doctrine or administration; wherein either the churches in general are concerned, or any one church, in their peace union, and edification; or any member or members of any church are injured, in or by any proceedings in censures not agreeable to truth and order; it is according to the mind of *Christ*, that many churches holding communion together, do by their messengers meet to consider (f) and give their advice in or about the matter in difference, to be reported to all the churches concerned; howbeit these messengers assembled, are not intrusted with any church-power properly so called; or with any jurisdiction over the churches themselves, to exercise any censures either over any churches, or persons; or (g) to impose their determination on the churches or officers.

(b) 1 Theſſalonians v. 14. 2 Theſſalonians iii. 6, 14, 15. (c) Matthew xviii 15—17. Ephesians iv. 2. 3. (d) Ephesians vi. 18. Psalm xxii 6. (e) Romans xvi. 1, 2. 3 John 8—10. (f) Acts xv. 2, 4, 6, 22, 23, 25. (g) 2 Corinthians i. 24. 1 John iv. 1.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Of the Communion of Saints.

1. **A**LL saints that are united to *Jesus Christ*, their head, by his Spirit, and faith, although they are not made thereby one person with him, have (*a*) fellowship in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection and glory; and being united to one another in love, they (*b*) have communion in each others gifts and graces, and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, in an orderly way, (*c*) as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.

2. Saints by profession, are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of *God*, and in performing such other spiritual services, (*d*) as tend to their mutual edification; as also in relieving each other in (*e*) outward things, according to their several abilities; and necessities; which communion, according to the rule of the Gospel, though especially to be exercised by them, in the relations wherein they stand, whether in (*f*) families or (*g*) churches, yet as *God* offereth opportunity, is to be extended to all the household of faith, even all those who in every place call upon the name of the *Lord Jesus*; nevertheless their communion one with another as saints, doth not take away, or (*h*) infringe the title or property which each man hath in his goods and possessions.

(*a*) 1 John i. 3. John i. 16. Philippians iii. 10. Romans vi. 5, 6. (*b*) Ephesians iv. 15, 16. 1 Corinthians xii. 7. & iii. 1—23. (*c*) 1 Thessalonians v. 11, 14. Romans i. 12. 1 John iii. 17, 18. Galatians vi. 10. (*d*) Hebrews x. 24, 25. and iii. 12, 13. (*e*) Acts xi. 29, 30. (*f*) Ephesians vi. 4. (*g*) 1 Corinthians xii. 14, 27. (*h*) Acts v. 4. Ephesians iv. 28.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

1. **BAPTISM** and the Lord's Supper, are ordinances of positive and sovereign institution, appointed by the *Lord Jesus*, the only Lawgiver, to be continued in his church (*a*) to the end of the world.

2. These holy appointments are to be administered by those only, who are qualified, and thereunto called according (*b*) to the commission of *Christ*.

CHAPTER XXX.

Of Baptism.

1. **BAPTISM** is an ordinance of the New-Testament, ordained by *Jesus Christ*, to be unto the party baptized, a sign of his fellowship with him in his death (*a*) and resurrection; of his being engrafted into him; of (*b*) remission of sins; and of his (*c*) giving up unto *God*, through *Jesus Christ*, to live and walk in newness of life.

2. Those who do actually profess (*d*) repentance towards *God*, faith in, and obedience to our *Lord Jesus*, are the only proper subjects of this ordinance.

3. The outward element, to be used in this ordinance, (*e*) is water, wherein the party is to be baptized. in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

4. Immersion, or dipping of the person (*f*) in water is necessary to the due administration of this ordinance.

(*a*) Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. : Cor. ii. 6. (*b*) Matth. xxviii. 19. 1 Cor. iv. 1. *a* Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5. Col. ii. 12. Gal. 3. 7. (*c*) Mark i. 4. Acts xxvi. 16. *c* Rom. vi. 4. (*d*) Mark iv. Acts viii. 37, 38. *e* Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. Acts viii. 38. Matth. iii. 16. John iii. 23.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Of Laying on of Hands.

WE believe that (a) *laying on of hands*, with prayer, *upon baptized believers, as such*, is an ordinance of *Christ*, and ought to be submitted unto by all such persons that are admitted to partake of the *Lord's Supper*, and that the end of this ordinance is not for the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, but for (b) a farther reception of the Holy Spirit of promise, or for the addition of the graces of the Spirit, and the influences thereof; to confirm strengthen, and comfort them in *Christ Jesus*; it being ratified and established by the (c) extraordinary gifts of the Spirit in the primitive times, to abide in the church as meeting together on the first day of the week was, Acts ii. 1. that being the day of worship, or christian sabbath, under the Gospel; and as preaching the word was, Acts x. 44. and as Baptism was, Matthew iii. 16. and prayer was, Acts iv. 31. and singing Psalms, &c. was, Acts, xvi. 25, 26. so this of laying on of hands was, Acts viii. and xix. for as the whole Gospel *was confirmed by (d) signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost* in general, so was every ordinance in like manner confirmed in particular.

(a) Hebrews v. 12. and vi. 1, 2. Acts viii. 17, 18. and xix. 6.

(b) Eph. i. 13, 14. (c) Acts viii. 7. and xix. 6. (d) Heb. ii. 3, 4.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of the Lord's Supper.

1. **T**HE supper of the *Lord Jesus*, was instituted by him, the same night wherein he was betrayed, to be observed in his churches unto the end of the world, for the perpetual remembrance, and shewing forth the sacrifice of himself in his death, (*a*) confirmation of the faith of believers in all the benefits thereof, their spiritual nourishment and growth in him, their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe unto him; (*b*) and to be a bond and pledge of their communion with him, and with each other.

2. In this ordinance, *Christ* is not offered up to his Father, nor any real sacrifice made at all for remission of sin, of the quick or dead, but only a memorial of that (*c*) one offering up of himself, by himself, upon the cross, once for all; and a spiritual oblation of all (*d*) possible praise unto *God* for the same. So that the *popish* sacrifice of the mass, as they call it, is most abominable, injurious to *Christ's* own only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of the elect.

3. The *Lord Jesus* hath in this ordinance, appointed his ministers to pray, and bless the elements of bread and wine, and thereby to set them apart from a common to an holy use, and to take and break the bread; to take the cup (*e*), and, they communicating also themselves, to give both to the communicants.

4. The denial of the cup to the people, worshipping the elements, the lifting them up or carrying them about for adoration, and reserving them for any pretended religious

(*a*) 1 Corinthians xi. 23—26. (*b*) 1 Corinthians x. 16, 17, 21.
 (*c*) Hebrews ix. 25, 26. 28. (*d*) 1 Corinthians xi. 24. Matthew
 xxvi. 26, 27. (*e*) 1 Corinthians xi. 23—26, &c.

use, (*f*) are all contrary to the nature of this ordinance and to the institution of *Christ*.

5. The outward elements in this ordinance, duly set apart to the uses ordained by *Christ*, have such relation to him crucified, as that truly, although in terms used figuratively, they are sometimes called by the name of the things they represent, to wit, the (*g*) body and blood of *Christ*, albeit in substance and nature, they still remain truly and only (*b*) bread and wine, as they were before.

6. The doctrine which maintains a change of the substance of bread and wine, into the substance of *Christ*'s body and blood, commonly called transubstantiation, by consecration of a priest, or by any other way, is repugnant not to scripture (*i*) alone, but even to common sense and reason, overthroweth the (*k*) nature of the ordinance, and hath been, and is the cause of manifold superstitions, yea, of gross idolatries.

7. Worthy receivers outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this ordinance, do then also inwardly, by faith really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually receive, and feed upon *Christ* crucified (*l*) and all the benefits of his death: the body and blood of *Christ* being then not corporally or carnally, but spiritually present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses.

8. All ignorant and ungodly persons, as they are unfit to enjoy communion (*m*) with *Christ*, so are they unworthy of the Lord's table, and cannot, without great sin against him, while they remain such, partake of these holy mysteries (*n*) or be admitted thereunto: yea, whosoever shall receive unworthily, are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, eating and drinking judgment to themselves.

(*f*) Matthew xxvi. 26—28. and xv. 9. Exodus xx. 4. 5.^s (*g*) 1 Corinthians xi. 27. (*b*) 1 Corinthians xi. 26, 28. (*i*) Acts iii. 21. Luke xxiv. 6. 39. (*k*) 1 Corinthians xi. 4, 5. (*l*) 1 Cor. x. 16. and xi. 23—26. (*m*) 2 Corinthians vi. 14, 15. (*n*) 1 Corinthians xi. 29. Matthew vii. 6.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Of the State of Man after Death, and of the Resurrection of the Dead.

1. **T**HE bodies of men after death return to dust, (*a*) and see corruption; but their souls, which neither die or sleep, having an immortal subsistence, immediately (*b*) return to *God* who gave them: the souls of the righteous being then made perfect in holiness, are received into paradise, where they are with *Christ*, and behold the face of *God*, in light and (*c*) glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies; and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torment and utter darkness reserved to (*d*) the judgment of the great day; besides these two places, for souls separated from their bodies, the scripture acknowledgeth none.

2. At the last day, such of the saints as are found alive shall not sleep but be (*e*) changed; and all the dead shall be raised up with the self-same bodies, and (*f*) none other; although with different (*g*) qualities, which shall be united again to their souls forever.

3. The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of *Christ* be raised to dishonour; the bodies of the just, by his Spirit, unto honour, (*h*) and be made conformable to his own glorious body.

(*a*) Genesis iii. 19. Acts xii. 36. (*b*) Ecclesiastes xiii. 7. (*c*) Luke xxiii. 43. 2 Corinthians v. 1, 6, 8. Philippians i. 23. Hebrews xii. 23. (*d*) Jude 6, 7. 1 Peter iii. 19. Luke xvi. 23, 24. (*e*) 1 Corinthians xv. 51, 52. 1 Thessalonians iv. 17. (*f*) Job xix. 26, 27. (*g*) 1. Corinthians xv. 4, 43. (*h*) Acts xxiv. 15. John v. 28, 29. Philippians iii. 21.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Of the last Judgment.

1. **G**OD hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, by (a) *Jesus Christ*; to whom all power and judgment is given of the Father; in which day not only the (b) apostate angels shall be judged, but likewise all persons that have lived upon the earth, shall appear before tribunal of *Christ*, (c) to give an account of their thoughts, words and deeds, and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil.

2. The end of *God's* appointing this day, is for the manifestation of the glory of his mercy, in the eternal salvation of the elect; (d) and of his justice, in the eternal damnation of the reprobate who are wicked and disobedient; for then shall the righteous go into everlasting life, and receive that fulness of joy and glory, with everlasting reward, in the presence (e) of the *Lord*: but the wicked who know not *God*, and obey not the Gospel of *Jesus Christ*, shall be cast into eternal torments, and (f) punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the *Lord*, and from the glory of his power.

3. As *Christ* would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a day of judgment, both (g) to deter all men from sin, and for the greater (h) consolation of the godly, in their adversity, so will he have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the (i) *Lord* will come, and may ever be prepared to say (k) *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.* Amen.

(a) Acts xvii. 31. John v. 22, 27. (b) 1 Cor. vi. 3. Jude 6. (c) Cor. v. 10. Eccl. xii. 14. Matth. xii. 36. Rom. xiv. 10, 12. Mat. xxv. 32, &c. (d) Rom. ix. 22, 23. (e) Mat. xxv. 2, 34. 2 Timothy iv. 8. (f) Matth. xxv. 46. Mark ix. 48. 2 Thess. i. 7—11. (g) 2 Cor. v. 10, 11. (h) 2 Thess. i. 5, 6, 7. (i) Mark xiii. 35—37. Luke xii. 35, 36. (k) Rev. xxii. 20.

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To all those into whose hands the foregoing Confession of Faith, unto which the following Abstract concerning our Discipline is now annexed, shall come.

OUR last Association, met at *Philadelphia*, Sept. 25. 1742. taking into consideration the general interest of the Gospel, and especially the interest of the Churches they were related unto and did then represent, judged it expedient to reprint the *Confession of Faith*, put forth by the Elders and Brethren of upwards of one hundred Congregations baptized upon profession of faith in *England* and *Wales*, met in *London*, Sept. 3. 1689, with the additions concerning *Imposition of Hands*, and *Singing of Psalms in the Worship of God*.

The Association likewise thought it proper to annex an Abstract, or brief Treatise concerning our Discipline, but not having, for some reasons, fixed on any particular piece extant, they left it to Mr. *Jenkin Jones* and myself to prepare a short Narrative, in the most compendious manner we could; but Mr. *Jones*, by reason of his other avocations, not being able to prepare any thing in due time, requested me to take it upon myself, which, after we had consulted on some particulars (though many other things at this juncture requiring my time and employing my thoughts, I could with some other person had undertaken) I accepted, that I might prevent any disappointment, and have endeavoured to perform as my small leisure would permit. And we having a small tract published by Mr. *Elias Keach*, and having also found a manuscript left by my Brother *Abel Morgan*, deceased, which he intended, had he longer lived, to have revised and put in print for the benefit of our

Churches; I have transcribed some things out of said manuscript, and some other things out of Mr. *Keach*, some things without variation, and some things with variation; besides which I have in some cases consulted Dr. *Owen* and Dr. *Goodwin*, and in some things I have followed the agreement that our Association came to some years ago, especially concerning the admission and dismissal of Members. I have endeavoured to include the most material things in Discipline (tho' very briefly) in the few following pages; and I desire the reader may be pleased to take the pains to peruse the Scriptures referred to in every particular, that the grounds of our practice may be better understood.

That this impartial account of our principles and practice may be accompanied with the blessing of *God*, to be beneficial unto men, is the hearty prayer of

Your well-wisher,

and Servant,

in all Gospel-Service,

BENJAMIN GRIFFITH.

SHORT TREATISE, &c.

*Concerning a true and orderly Gospel Church.*

BEFORE there can be any orderly discipline among a christian assembly, they must be orderly constituted into a church-state, according to the institution of *Christ* in the Gospel.

1. A visible Gospel Church is made by gathering divers select persons unto *Jesus Christ*, in a spiritual body, and relation to him as their political head, Ezekial xxxiv. 11. 2 Thessalonians ii. 1. himself being the great shepherd, that first seeks them, and prepares them by the work of renewing grace, for such spiritual building.

2. *Christ* as the Mediator of the new covenant, ordereth the everlasting Gospel to be preached, and accompanying it with his holy Spirit, blesteth it to the turning of men from darkness to light, working faith and love in them, Ephesians ii. 17. Acts xxvi. 18.

3. When sinners are thus wrought upon effectually, to such a suitable number, as may be an essential Church, i. e. so many as may act properly and orderly as a church, Matthew xviii. 15—17. that then it will be proper for them by their mutual consent, to propose to be constituted a Church, or that others seeing the expediency thereof may encourage the same, Acts xi.

4. For the accomplishment of so glorious a work, it is necessary that a day of fasting and prayer be appointed by and among such believers, and that such procure such neighbouring helps as they can, especially of the ministry, Acts viii. 14. 1 Thessalonians iii. 2.

5. The persons being first orderly baptized, according to the command of *Christ* in Matthew xxviii. 19. and being all satisfied of the graces and qualifications of each other, and being willing in the fear of *God* to take the laws of *Christ* upon them, and do by one mutual consent give up themselves to the *Lord*, and to one another in the *Lord*, 2 Corinthians viii. 5. solemnly submitting to the government of *Christ* in his Church, and being united, they are to be declared a Gospel Church of *Jesus Christ*, Philippians ii. 2, 3, 4. Romans xv. 7. and xii. 1. Acts ii. 41, 42.

6. A number of believers thus united under *Christ* their mystical head, are become a Church essential; and as such is the first and proper subject of the keys, and have power and privilege to govern themselves, and to choose out their own ministerial officers, Acts xiv. 23. and vi. 3.

Concerning Ministers, &c.

A CHURCH thus constituted, is not yet completed, while wanting such ministerial helps, as *Christ* hath appointed for its growth and well being; and wanting elders and deacons to officiate among them. Men, they must be, that are qualified for the work; their qualifications are plainly and fully set down in hold Scripture, 1 Timothy iii. 2—7. Titus iv. 5—10. all which must be found in them, in some good degree, and it is the duty of the church to try the persons, by the rule of the word.

Objection. But what shall a church do, in case they can have none among them fit to bear office according to the rule of the word?

Answer (1.) That to expect to have officers perfect in the highest degrees of those qualifications, were to expect apostolical and extraordinary ceased gifts in ordinary times. (2.) If none among the members of a church be found fit in some measure for the ministry, a neighbouring

church may and ought, if possible, to supply them, Canticles viii. 8. (3.) Let such as they have, if they have any that seem hopeful, be a while upon trial; and the person that the *Lord* shall chuse, will flourish in some good measure with *Aaron's* rod among the rods of the tribes.

2. A church being destitute of ministerial helps, may, after mature and often deliberate consultation, and serious prayers to *God*, pitch upon some person or persons in particular, giving him or them a solemn invitation to the work of the ministry upon trial; and if such accept of the church's call, let such be upon trial, to see if such fear *God*, make godliness their business, and be addicted to the work of the ministry, seeking to further the interest of *Christ*, and the edification of his people in sound and wholesome doctrine; and to see if any vices or immorality appear in their advances, 1 Corinthians xvi. Philippians ii. 20, 21. Read the qualifications in 1 Timothy iii. And in case a church should call a person to be their minister who is a member of some sister-church, and he accept their call to be their minister, he must in the first place give himself a member with the church so calling him, that so they may chuse him among themselves, as Acts vi. 3.

After having taken all due care to chuse one for the work of the ministry, they are by and with the unanimous consent or suffrage of the church, to proceed to his ordination; which is a solemn setting apart of such a person for the sacred function, in this wise, by setting apart a day of fasting and prayer, Acts xiii. 2, 3. the whole church being present, he is to have the hands of the presbytery of that church, or of neighbouring elders called and authorised by that church, whereof such a person is a member, solemnly laid upon him, 1 Timothy v. 22. Titus i. 5. Acts xiv. 23. 1 Timothy iv. 14. and thus such a person is to be recommended into the work of the *Lord*, and to take particular care of the flock of whom he is thus chosen, Acts xx. 28.

4. The minister being thus put upon his work, proceeds (1) to preach the word of *God* unto them, thereby to feed the flock, and therein ought to be faithful and laborious,

studying to show himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, 2 Timothy ii. 15. as he is a steward of *God* in the mysteries of the Gospel, 1 Corinthians iv. 1, 2. and therefore ought to be a man of good understanding and experience, being sound in the faith, not a novice, or a double-minded unstable man, nor such as is light-spirited or of a shallow understanding, but one that is learned in the mysteries of the kingdom, because he is to feed the people with knowledge and understanding, Jeremiah iii. 15. He must be faithful in declaring the whole counsel of *God*, Acts xx. 20. He is to instruct them in all practical godliness, laying before them their manifold duties, and to urge them upon their consciences, Titus ii. 1—15. 1 Timothy iv. 6. (2) He must watch over them, as one that must give an account to *God*, Hebrew xiii. 17. Such must have an eye upon every member to see how they behave in the house of *God*, where the presence of the *Lord* is more eminently, and where also the angels do always attend; and also their behaviour in the families they belong to, and their conversation abroad: according to their capacities, they are not to sleep under their charge. (3) He is to visit his flock, to know their state, in order to minister suitable doctrinal relief unto them, and that he may know what disorders there may be among them, that the unruly may be reproved, Proverbs xxvii. 23. 1 Thessalonians v. 14, 15. (4) He is to administer all the ordinances of *Christ*, amongst them: as Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and herein he must be careful to follow the primitive pattern, thereby to hold forth the great end, wherefore they were ordained. (5) He must be instant with *God*, in his prayers for and with them, as opportunity may serve. (6) He must show them a good example in all respects, in conversation, sobriety, charity, faith and purity, 1 Timothy iv. 12. behaving himself impartial unto all, not preferring the rich before the poor, nor lording it over *God's* heritage, nor assume greater power than *God* hath given him, James ii. 4. 1 Timothy v. 21. 1 Peter v. 3, 5.

Of Ruling Elders.

RULING elders are such persons as are endued with gifts to assist the pastor or teacher in the government of the church; it was as a statute in Israel, Exodus xviii. Deuteronomy i. 9—13. The works of teaching and ruling belong both to the pastor; but in case he be unable, or the work of ruling too great for him, *God* hath provided such for his assistance, and they are called ruling elders, 1 Timothy v. 17. helps, 1 Corinthians xii. 28. governments, or he that ruleth, Romans xii. 8. They are qualified for, and called unto, one part of the work: and experience teacheth us the use and benefit of such rulers in the church, in easing the pastor or teacher, and keeping up the honour of the ministry. Their qualifications are such as are requisite to rule, as knowledge, judgment, prudence, &c. and as to the manner of their ordination, it is like ordination unto other offices in the church, with fasting and prayer, with imposition of hands. Their office only relateth to rule and order, in the church of *God*, and doth not include teaching; yet if the church findeth they have gifts and abilities to be useful in teaching, they may be put upon trial, and if approved, they may be called and solemnly set apart by ordination, it being wholly a distinct office from the former, which was only to rule well, and not to labour in word and doctrine.

Of Deacons.

DEACONS are men called forth by the church, to serve in the outward concerns thereof; whose office is to serve tables, Acts vi. 2—7. They are to be entrusted with the stock of the church, out of which stock they are to assist the poor members of the church, and to provide Bread and Wine for the *Lord's* table, and also to have

regard to the Minister's table; and moreover they should see that all the members of the church do contribute towards the proper uses of the church, that therefrom all necessary occasions may be supplied as *God* hath given them, they to the poor, so that none be neglected, 1 Corinthians xvi. 2. by the faithful discharge of which office they shall purchase to themselves a good degree and great boldness in the faith, 1 Timothy iii. 13. The qualifications of these officers are laid down 1 Timothy iii. 8—13. Acts vi. 2—8.

Of the Admission of Church Members.

THE *Lord Jesus Christ* hath committed the use and power of the keys, in matters of government, to every visible congregational church, to be used, according to the rules and directions that he hath given in his word, in his name and to his glory. The keys are the power of *Christ*, which he hath given to every particular congregation, to open and shut itself by; and to do all things in order to the great things proposed, *viz.* his glory and his people's spiritual benefit, in peace and purity, Isaiah ix. 7. and xxii. 22. Revelation iii. 7. Hebrews iii. 6. Ephesians ii. 19—22. Matthew xvi. 19. John xx. 23.

By virtue of the charter and the power aforesaid, which *Christ* hath given to his church, his spiritual corporation, they are enabled to receive members in, and to exclude unworthy members as occasion may require, as may appear by divers examples, Romans xiv. 1. Acts ii. 41. 1 Corinthians v. 4. 5. Matthew xviii. 18. 2 Thessalonians ii. 6. 14.

In this case, a church hath to do, either with non-members, or those that are members of other churches; as to non-members proposing for admission into the church, the pastor, teacher and elders of the church are to be acquainted therewith, and the body of the church also, in

order that they may know the intent of such person or persons. A convenient meeting is necessary. When the church is come together, and the person proposing being present, after prayer to God for direction, the minister or pastor of the church is to put several questions to the person proposing. (1) Concerning the ground and reason of his hope, 1 Peter iii. 15. wherein is to be enquired, what experience he hath of the manifold graces of the holy Spirit, working in him repentance from dead works, as Acts ii. 38. Hebrews vi. 2. and faith towards our *Lord Jesus Christ*, in whom alone is salvation hoped for, Acts xx. 21. Philemon v.; for without there be some good grounds, in the judgment of charity, that such an one is a new creature, the door of admission is not to be opened, for that would be abusing the privileges of the house of *God*. Therefore all due and regular care is to be taken, Psalm lxvi. 16. Acts ix. 27.

Secondly. What competency of knowledge, in the principal doctrines of faith and order, such hath acquired, 1 Timothy ii. 4—6. whether such person be well instructed in the knowledge of God, in his glorious attributes, in the doctrine of the Trinity, or one *God* in three persons; the person, natures and offices of *Christ*; the nature of the law; of original sin; of the pollution of man, by reason of sin, and lost and undone estate thereby, and of his being a child of wrath by nature; of the nature of the redemption wrought by *Christ*, his sufficiency to satisfy divine justice; of the reconciliation of sinners to *God*, by the death of his Son; of our sins being imputed to *Christ*, and his righteousness imputed to us for justification, being received by faith alone; of the resurrection of *Christ's* body, and his ascension into heaven, and of his coming thence the second time, to judge the quick and the dead; and of the resurrection of the dead bodies of men, and of the eternal judgment; and of such proposing person's resolution to persevere in the profession of these truths unto the end. Such things are needful to be enquired into, by reason that too many in our day do build their conversion upon their convictions, and some general notions of the Christian religion, when

indeed they are utter strangers unto, and very ignorant of the great mysteries of the Gospel. Yet great care is to be taken that the weak be not discouraged, for the smoking flax is not to be quenched, nor the bruised reed to be broken, but such ignorant persons are to be taught by gentle instructions, and means ought to be used for their furtherance in the knowledge of divine truths, Matthew xxviii. 19. and where there is the beginnings of true and saving grace in the heart, such will with a spiritual appetite, receive the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby, 1 Peter ii. 2. and a church ought to be careful not to reject those, whom they judge to have the least degree of the work of saving grace wrought in them, Romans xiv. 1.

Thirdly. Enquiry must be made whether such a person's life and conversation is answerable to such a profession, that he be likely to adorn the Gospel with a holy conversation, Titus, ii. 11—15. iii. 8. This regular carefulness is an indispensable duty of all regular churches, to use in the admission of members; and though all due care be used, yet some unsound and rotten professors will creep in unawares, and have crept into the purest churches, Jude 4. 1 John ii. 19. Acts v. Acts xx. 29. 30. Galatians ii. 4. and the fallibility of churches in this matter, is not to be urged, as an argument or ground to neglect the duty incumbent on the churches, according to the rule of the word.

And after such examination, the question is to be put to the church, whether they are all satisfied with the party's confession and conversation; and if the answer be in the affirmative, then the pastor or minister is to proceed, to ask the party proposing, if he be willingly resolved, as *God* shall give ability, to walk in a professed subjection to the commands and institutions of *Christ* revealed in the Gospel, and to give himself a member of that church in particular, Romans xii. 1. xv. 7, 8, 9. 2 Corinthians viii. 5. and to continue in the communion, faith, and order thereof, according to the gospel-rules and directions; and after the person is baptized according to the institution and command of *Christ*, and come under the imposition of the hands of

the elders of the church, according to the practice of the Apostles, Acts viii. 14—17. Hebrews vi. 2. the pastor, minister or elders, as presiding in the acts of the church's power, do receive such an one into the communion and fellowship of that church in particular. But if the church is not satisfied with the person's confession or conversation, it is proper, if the objections be of any weight, to defer the party's admission until a more ample satisfaction can be given, that all, if possible, may receive such with freedom in love, and so as to discharge all Gospel duties towards him, as may promote his edification in the faith, and his increase in grace, 2 Corinthians i. 24. x. 8.

And concerning those that are members of sister churches, their admission is either transient or occasional admission; or when any person is dismissed wholly from one church, and transmitted or recommended to another church of the same faith, order and practice. (1) Such as are and continue members of other regular churches, may, where they are well known, be admitted into transient communion, without a letter of recommendation from the church they belong unto: but from those a church hath no knowledge of, a testimonial letter is necessary, that a church may not be imposed on by any loose or disorderly persons. (2) Those whose residence is removed, or place of abode is more convenient to be with another congregation than that of which they are members, are, upon their request made to the church whereof such are members, to be dismissed, and to have a letter from that church they are members of, subscribed by the officers and members, and directed to the church that the person is dismissed unto; whereby the party is discharged from his or her original relation of particular membership to that church, and is transferred to the constant communion, watch and care of the other church: such persons are to be received upon their proposal, according to the credentials they bring; except the church they apply unto have a special reason to defer or refuse.

As it appears to have been the practice of believers, in the primitive times, to give themselves members of particular

churches, Acts ii. 41. v. 13, 14. it appears also that, in the Apostles days, there were many distinct and distant particular churches, as 1 Corinthians i. 2. Galatians i. 2. 1 Corinthians xvi. 1. Philippians i. 1. which churches are several corporations of men professing repentance from dead works, and faith in our *Lord Jesus Christ*, and incorporated by mutual consent, as before mentioned, whose end is to glorify *God* by obedience to his revealed will, and to their own edification in the faith, and the good of others; so it is the duty of believers to give themselves in particular membership, in such a particular church as shall appear by the word of *God* to be orthodox in the fundamental articles of the christian religion, and to practice according to the mind of *Christ* declared in the New Testament, in all Gospel institutions and worship.

From which considerations, it appears the reasonable duty of every believer to give himself a member to such an orderly church as is most conveniently situated, that is, meeting nearest the place of his or her residence, for which there are these apparent reasons. (1) For men to give themselves members of a distant church, when another of the same faith and gospel-order is nigher, is for such a person to put himself under a necessity of neglecting the ordinary appointed meetings of that church, whereof he is member, and whereof the particular charge is given, Hebrews x. 25. that he might attend and wait in the use of *God's* appointed means, for his edification by the ministry of that church. (2) Such puts himself under a wilful necessity to neglect his duty of care over, and constant communion with his fellow members, and wilfully deprives himself of their care over him, advice, christian conversing, and brotherly loving instructions and counsels, that by the blessing of *God* might increase his knowledge, grace and comfort. (3) Such cannot be assistant to the church in discipline, contribution, and the like duties, nor cannot be taken care of, and be assisted, without much unnecessary trouble, by the church, in case of need. (4) Such a practice tends directly to the confusion of churches, and all church order, and suits well with the humour of noisy,

lifeless, loose, or covetous niggardly persons. (5) It is a way that the church cannot find what useful talents such persons may have, to the benefit of the body of the church. (6) It is casting great contempt upon the nearer church, in her ministry and order, and the like.

And here it is further to be considered, that as it is expedient for persons to give themselves members of such regular churches, with which they may keep the most intimate fellowship and communion in all the parts of religious worship. So it is highly reasonable that they, that are members of such regular churches, where the word is purely preached, the ordinances of the Gospel duly administered, and gospel discipline is impartially practised, should continue their membership with such church; although there be weakness, imperfection and frailty, in the particular practical acts thereof; which, while the affairs of the church are managed by men, even their holy things will have iniquity as of old, Exodus xxviii. 38. It is therefore unreasonable to dismiss any member, from a church that is near to any one's residence, to a church more remote, upon disgust taken at the management of some particular case, wherewith such is not well pleased, and for such cause demands dismissal; and it is unreasonable also to grant a dismissal to such a member, who should demand a dismissal in a peremptory manner, without giving a reason for such a demand; in either of which cases, such a dismissal is not to be granted. (1) Because by so doing the greatest confusion would be introduced: for one member would thus be dismissed to one distant church, and another to another distant church, and the other churches doing the like, it can end in nothing less than the confusion of every church. (2) The same liberty that members have, pastors, ministers, ruling elders, and deacons have also, whereby any church may dismiss her members until she is unable to maintain worship and communion: for those that reside near, are become members of a remote body, and so unconcerned; and those that are members live remote and so under an impossibility to occupy their place. (3) This, in the tendency of it, is to remove the balance of

churches, which is to consist of such members, as can, with the utmost conveniency, meet together in one place, for both worship and government, 1 Corinthians xi. 20. xiv. 33. (4) This hath a tendency to alter the constitution of particular churches, from being congregational corporations, into the national or universal notion of the church; which universal church we believe to be the mystical body of *Jesus Christ*, which as such is not the seat of instituted worship and ordinances. Also it is not reasonable to dismiss to the world at large, nor to dismiss a member to a church, with which the church dismissing cannot hold communion.

Of the Duties of Church Members.

THE members of churches owe all their duties in a way of obedience to the will of *God* revealed in his word; and their duties are to be performed in love to our *Lord Jesus Christ*, John xiv. 15. who is the great Prophet, Priest and King of his Church, which he hath purchased with his own blood, Acts xx. 28. Revelation i. 5. 2 Corinthians v. 15. unto whom all power in heaven and earth is given, Matthew xxviii. 18. and is therefore our *Lord* and lawgiver, Isaiah xxxiii. 22. who alone is head of his church, Ephesians i. 22. his person is to be honoured, and all his commands are to be observed, Hebrews i. 2. John v. 23. all worship is to be ascribed unto him, as *God* blessed for ever, Romans ix. 5. all church members, therefore, are under the strictest obligations to do and observe whatsoever *Christ* enjoineth on them, as mutual duties towards one another.

The officers of the church, whom *Christ* hath appointed, are to be respected. (1) The deacons of the church, though they officiate but in the outward concerns of the church, as in the section about deacons is noted, if they are faithful, do purchase unto themselves a good degree, 1 Timothy iii. 13. are therefore to be respected. (2) Ruling elders also are to be respected, seeing they are fitted of *God*, and called by the church to go before the church, or to preside

in acts of government and rule, 1 Timothy v. 17. (3) Ministers, who are the stewards of the mysteries of the Gospel, are in an eminent manner to be regarded, as being the ambassadors of peace, 2 Corinthians v. 20. though they are not to hunt for it, as the pharisees of old, Matthew xxiii. 5, 6, 7. The duties of church members towards their elders, teachers, ministers and pastors, may be included in their (1) praying for them, that *God* would open a door of utterance unto them, to unfold the mysteries, Ephesians vi. 18, 19, 20. (2) To obey them in the *Lord*, in whatsoever they admonish them, according to the word of *God*, Hebrews xiii. 17, 22. (3) In following their example and footsteps, as far as warranted by the word, 1 Corinthians iv. 16. xi. 1. Philippians iii. 17. Hebrews xiii. 7. (4) In standing by them, in all their trials and afflictions, and in defending them in all good causes, as far as in them lies; in 2 Timothy i. 15. those of Asia are blamed, for turning away, or not standing by the Apostle. (5) In not exposing their persons for their infirmities, as far as may be, considering the prosperity of the Gospel much depends on their good report, Acts xxiii. 5. (6) In contributing towards their maintenance, that they may attend wholly on teaching, and give themselves to the ministry of the word, and to prayer, Acts vi. 4. the reason thereof is evident, by a threefold law. (1) The law of nature, from whence the Apostle argues, 1 Corinthians ix. 7—11. (2) The Levitical law, 1 Corinthians ix. 13. (3) The Gospel enjoineeth and requireth the same, Galatians vi. 6. 1 Corinthians ix. 14. Let these above-cited places of Scripture be considered, with many others of like importance, and the nature and tendency of the work of the ministry be well weighed, and it will be clear that it is a duty required of *God* himself; and that not in a way of alms, as to the poor, which is another standing ordinance of *Christ*, but is to be performed in love to *Christ*, and obedience to his laws, in order to support and carry the interest of the Gospel. Yet this is not to be given to any one that may pretend to be a minister, or thrust himself upon a church, or to such as run without

a million for filthy lucre's sake ; but churches ought to take a special care who to call forth to the work of the ministry, according to the rule of instruction given by inspiration of *God*, be they learned or unlearned as to human learning, be they rich or poor, as to worldly wealth.

The liberality of the people, if they be able, should surmount the necessity of the minister, so as that he may exercise those acts of love and hospitality, as is required of such, that therein he may be exemplary in good works, &c. Moreover it is a duty on all those that attend on their ministry, to assist herein, Galatians vi. 6. and as people do sow, so shall they reap, Galatians vi. 7, and 8. vide *Confession of Faith*, xxvii. §. 10. When people neglect their duty towards their ministers, such ministers must of necessity neglect their studies, and betake to other secular employments to support themselves and families, or be worse than infidels ; then such people must be great spiritual losers in their edification. Yet when and where a church is not able to raise a comfortable maintenance for to support their minister, there it is not only lawful, but the duty of such ministers to labour with their hands : for to leave such a congregation destitute, to languish without the ministry, would be very uncharitable, and smell very much of filthy lucre ; and to expect from a people, more than they are able, would be oppression or extortion.

*Of the manifold Duties of Christians, especially
to the Household of Faith.*

SOME of them are these. (1) Love unfeigned and without dissimulation, for all their things ought to be done in love, John xiii. 34, 35. Romans xii. 9, 10. xiii. 8, 9, 10. (2) To labour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, Ephesians iv. 3. (3) Endeavour for the edification and spiritual benefit of the whole body, that they all may grow up to be a holy temple in and for the *Lord*, 1 Corinthians xiv. 12, 26. Ephesians iv. 12, 29.

- ii. 21, 22. (4) That they all watch over one another for good, Philippians ii. 3, 4. (5) That they do pray with and for one another, James v. 16. (6) That they neglect not the assembling of themselves together, for the celebrating of divine worship, and so promote one anothers spiritual benefit, Hebrews x. 25. Acts ii. 42. (7) That they use all means to keep the house of *God* in due order and cleanness, walking inoffensive towards one another, and all others, with conscientious diligence, and so unanimously to contend for the faith and truth once delivered to the saints, in the purity thereof, according to the holy Scripture, Psalm xciii. 5. Zechariah xiv. 20. 21. 1 Corinthians xiv. 33. 40. xi. 2.
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Of Church Censures.

HAVING spoken of the gathering together of a particular Gospel church, and its officers, and the rules whereby we are to be guided in choosing and ordaining of them, and of the admission of members, &c. it is meet to give a short view of a church's duties and authority, in respect of censures upon offenders.

First, of Admonition.

(1) Admonition is a holy, tender and wise endeavour, to convince a brother, that hath offended in matter of fact, or else is fallen into a way, wherein to continue is like to be prejudicial to the party himself or some others; where the matter, whatever it be, and the sinfulness thereof, with the aggravating circumstances attending it, is to be charged on his conscience, in the sight of *God*, with due application of the word of *God*, which concerns his condition; thereby leading him to his duty and true reformation. (2) Admonition is private by one or more of the brethren, or more public by the whole church. (1) When one brother trespasses against another, the offended brother is not to divulge the offence, but to go in a gospel way to the offender,

and to use his endeavour to reclaim his brother ; and if he repents, the offended brother ought to forgive him, Matthew xviii. 15. Luke xvii. 3. But if the offending brother will not hear, then the offended brother ought to take two or three other brethren, and they such as may be most likely to gain upon the offender ; but if this admonition also takes no effect, it is to be brought before the church, Matthew xviii. 16, 17. (2) The church when matters come thus before them, shall admonish and endeavour to reclaim the offender, in the spirit of meekness ; and if the brother that offended continues obstinate and impenitent, the church is directed to exclude him, Matthew xviii. 17.

(1) From whence it follows, every church-member has somewhat to do in his place, Hebrews xii. 15. (2) In case of private offences it is preposterous to publish them, or acquaint the church or the elders thereof therewith, before the two lower degrees of admonition are duly accomplished, and the offender has neglected to hear. (3) That when matters are thus regularly brought to the church, then private proceedings may cease. (4) That when private offences are brought to the church without such proper private procedure, that the church may and ought to refuse it, as not coming according to gospel-rule aforesaid, in Matthew xviii. (5) But when those things that begin in private are thus regularly brought into the church, they must be received and adjudged according to the said rule, Matthew xviii. So that it may and doth oftentimes fall out, that those things that begin with private admonition, do end in public excommunication.

Secondly, of Suspension.

(1) A suspension may be, when the church is informed that a member hath acted amiss, either in matters of faith or practice, and not having satisfactory proof whether the information is true or false, and the case requiring time to enquire therein, it is expedient to suspend such a person from communion at the *Lord's* table, until the elders of the church can make suitable enquiry ; as might be signified by the law in the case of leprosy, Leviticus 13th and 14th chapters.

(2) Suspension is rather to be looked upon to be, when a church doth debar a member from communion for some irregularity that he may be guilty of, which yet doth not amount so high as to be ripe for the great sentence of excommunication; but that the person, for such irregularity, ought to be debarred of the privilege of special communion and exercise of office, in order to his humiliation, 2 Thessalonians iii. 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15. Such is not to be accounted as an enemy, but to be exhorted as a brother in union though not in communion; but if such an one remain impenitent and incorrigible, the church, after due waiting for his reformation, is to proceed to excommunication, Matthew xviii. 17, for that would be a not hearing the church in the highest degree.

Thirdly, of Excommunication.

Excommunication is a judicial act or censure of the church, upon an offender, by the authority of *Jesus Christ*, and by his direction, delivered to his church by himself or his Apostles, in the New Testament, which a Gospel-Church ought to put in practice, when matters of fact require, according to Gospel-rule; as first, when a member, after all due admonition, continues obstinate, and will hear no reproof, Matthew xviii. 17. *Secondly*, when a member hath committed a gross sin, which is directly against the moral law, and being notorious and scandalous, and proved beyond dispute, 1 Corinthians v. 4, 5. 1 Timothy v. 24. 2 Corinthians x. 6. then a church is immediately to proceed unto censure, notwithstanding any present signs of conviction or remorse, for the necessary vindication of the glory of *God*, the vindication of the church also, and their holy profession: and to manifest their just indignation and abhorrence against such wickedness, 1 Corinthians v. 1—13. *Thirdly*, when a member is found to be erroneous, defective, or heretical in some fundamental point, or to swerve from the right faith, in the principles of the christian religion, 1 Timothy i. 19, 20.

The manner of proceeding unto this great and awful instituted ordinance, is: the church being gathered together; the offender also having notice to come to make his answer

and defence (if he comes not, he aggravates his offence by despising the authority of *Christ* in his church) the body of the church is to have knowledge of the offender's crime fully, and the full proof thereof as of plain matter of fact; and after mature deliberate consideration, and consulting the rules of direction given in the word of *God*, whether the offender be present or absent, the minister or elder puts the question to the whole church, whether they judge the person guilty of such crime now proved upon him, is worthy of the censure of the church for the same? to which the members in general give their judgment; which, if it be in the affirmative, then the judgment of the members in general being had, or the majority of them, the pastor, minister, or elder sums up the sentence of the church, opens the nature of the crime, with the suitableness of the censure, according to Gospel rule; and having thus proceeded, a proper time is fixed to put the sentence in execution, at which time the pastor, minister or elder of the church, as his place and duty requires, is to lay open the heinousness of such a sin, with all the aggravating circumstances thereof, and shewing what an abominable scandal such an offender is become to religion, what dishonour it is to *God*, &c. applying the particular places of Scripture that are proper to the case, in order to charge the offence home upon the conscience of the offender if present, that others also may fear; shewing also the awful nature of this great censure, and the main end thereof, for the salvation and not the destruction of the soul, and with much solemnity in the whole society, calling upon *God* for his gracious presence, and his blessing upon this his sacred ordinance; that the great end thereof may be obtained. Still expressing the deep sense the church hath of the fall of this brother, with the great humiliation of the church, and great sorrow for, and detestation of the sin committed. The said pastor, minister, or elder, in the name of the *Lord Jesus Christ*, in the presence of the congregation, and by and with the consent and according to the judicial sentence of the church, cuts off, and secludes such an offender by name, from the union and communion of the

church, because of his offences: so that such a person is not thenceforth to be looked on, deemed or accounted as a brother or member of such a church, until *God* shall restore him again by repentance.

Which exclusion carries in it the full sense of our *Lord's* words, Matthew xviii. 17. *Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican*; or of the Apostle, 1 Corinthians v. 5. *to deliver such an one to Satan*; which is an authoritative putting of such a person out of the communion of the church, the kingdom of heaven, into the world, the kingdom of Satan, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, in order to his being humbled and broken under a sight and sense of his sins, which is meant by the destruction of the flesh, and to the end that the spirit may be saved in the day of the *Lord*.

Amongst the many disorders which church-members may be guilty of, and for the obstinate continuance therein, a church may and ought to use the power that *Christ* hath given to exclude them from her communion, that is one, which is when a member doth seclude himself, and that not in any regular way, but contrary to all rule and order: for when a church-member, by reason of some offence he hath taken at the church or some of the members thereof, and hath not done his duty according to the rule of the word, or else is a dying away in religion, by one means or another, as by the love of the world, change of condition in marriage, not having his expected preferment in the church, or the like, doth as it were excommunicate himself, the church according to their duty ought to use their endeavours to reclaim such; which endeavours, if they prove fruitless, and the party obstinate, the church ought not to acquiesce in his irregular departure from them, as if all their bonds of relation and duty were over, and no more was to be done, seeing the party hath usurped the power of the keys to himself: the church therefore must maintain the power that *Christ* hath committed unto it, though it cannot hinder the inordinate and unruly passions of such an one, if *God* leaves him to it. He will

run away from the church, renting himself schismatically off, breaking through all order and covenant obligations, in opposition to brotherly endeavours to hinder him, and to stay him in his place; the church is to proceed judicially to turn the key upon such a sinful disorderly departer; and publicly declare, that as such an one by name hath been guilty of such a thing, naming his disorders, he is no longer in their communion, nor under their watch and care, &c. and that such a person is not to return to their communion, until he hath given satisfaction to the church, Romans xvi. 17. Such a separation or departure is very sinful, for these and the like reasons. (1) Because the church is a corporation privileged with laws and rules for admittance and dimittance, which ought to be observed, Matthew xviii. Romans xii. 4, 5. (2) Such a departure is rude and indecent, therefore dishonourable, 1 Corinthians xiv. 40. (3) Because if members may take this liberty, all the officers of the church, ministers, ruling elders and deacons may take the same liberty, which would soon un-church any church, or at least be destructive to its beauty, comfort and edification, John vi. 67. (4) All members do covenant the contrary, Isaiah xlv. 5. and therefore it is a breach of covenant, which is a black character, 2 Timothy iii. 3. (5) It destroys totally the relation between elders and people, which *God* hath ordained, Matthew ix. 36. (6) It is an usurping of the keys, or rather stealing of them, Amos vi. 13. (7) It is schism: if there is such a thing in the world, it is of particular churches, 1 Corinthians xi. 18. xii. 25. (8) It is a high contempt of *Christ* in the government of his church, Jude xviii. 19. 2 Peter ii. 10, 11. (9) It is to break the staff of beauty [*covenant*] and of bands and brotherhood too, Zechariah xi. 10, 14. (10) It argues either some great undiscovered guilt lying on the party, or some by-ends in his first seeking admission into such a church. All which put together, it declares the great unity of a congregational gospel-church, and the sinfulness of such disorderly persons in breaking off without a just cause: but if any church becomes heretical in principles, or idolatrous in worship, or immoral in life,

it is lawful for persons, after they have discharged their conscience and duty in reprovng and bearing witness against such gross defections, to depart, 2 Corinthians vi. 17, 18.

Other disorders and causes of discords in churches are these, and many of the like; (1) When members of churches, by their ignorance of the rules of discipline and right government of the church of *Christ*, do not act according to their duty; particularly when that rule, Matthew xviii. 15, 16. is not observed; and that is, either (1) When offended members, instead of going to the offender, to tell him his fault, will be divulging it disorderly to others whether members or non-members. (2) When offended members instead of acting according to the said rule, do conceal the matter from the offender and every body else, lest they should be looked upon as contentious persons: and thereby they suffer sin upon their brother, and are become guilty of other men's sins, and thereby they suffer the name of *God*, their holy profession, and the church, to lie under a reproach by their neglect; either of which ways is very sinful, as being contrary to the express rule given by our *Lord Christ*; and such ought, as being thereby become offenders themselves, to be in a gospel-way dealt with.

(2) When an elder or a church do know that some of the members are immoral and scandalous in life, or heretical in matters of faith and judgment, and yet bear with them, or connive at them.

(3) When members of churches take liberty to go to hear to other places, when the church is assembled to worship *God*, which is directly contrary to Hebrews x. 25. and is no less than breaking covenant with the church they belong unto, and may soon dissolve and unchurch any particular church; for, by the same rule that one member takes such liberty, another may, yea, all the members may, until their assembling entirely cease. And moreover it is casting great contempt on the ministry of such a church, and may cause others to be disaffected to the doctrine

taught in such, though sound and orthodox. Yet no restraint ought to be laid on members going to hear at other places, where sound doctrine is taught, at other times.

(4) When members take liberty to go to hear men that are corrupt in doctrine, and so suck in some unsound notions of religion, and endeavour to corrupt others with what they have imbibed themselves. And alas! how many in our unhappy days are corrupted with *Arminianism*, *Socinianism*, and what not? Such cause trouble and great disorders.

(5) Another disorder that may cause discord, is, when members are received without the general and unanimous consent of the church; or when any are admitted, with whose confession or life and conversation, the generality of the members are not satisfied: or when elders and ministers or leaders of the church, are remiss and careless in the reception of members.

(6) When a church shall receive a charge against a member, it being an offence given by one brother to another brother, before an orderly procedure has been made by the offended brother, according to the rule, Matthew xviii.

(7) When judgment passes with partiality, or some are connived at out of favour or affection, and others censured out of envy or without due conviction. *Levi* was not to know his father, mother or children in judgment, Deuteronomy xxxiii. 8.

(8) When the charges of a church are not equally borne by the members according to their several abilities, but some are burthened when others do little or nothing.

(9) When accusations are received against an elder contrary to the rule, 1 Timothy v. 16. which requires two or three witnesses as to matter of fact.

(10) When any member shall divulge to persons not of the congregation, nor concerned in those matters, what is done in the church-meetings: the church in this respect, as well as in others, is to be a garden enclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed, Canticles iv. 12. This often

occasions great grief and trouble, and therefore such disorderly persons should be detected. Is it not a shame to any to divulge the secrets of a family? But far greater shame do such persons expose themselves unto.

(11) When days of prayer, fasting or thanksgiving, or days of discipline appointed by the church, are not carefully observed and kept.

In all these and many other things of like nature, the members of particular churches ought to give all diligence to walk worthy of their vocation, and according to the rule and direction of the word of *God*, that disorders may be prevented, and that church communion may be maintained in peace and purity, to the edifying of the body of the church of *Christ* in love.

Of the Communion of Churches.

EVERY particular congregational church incorporated by and according to the institution of *Christ* in the Gospel, and duly organized according to the pattern of the primitive churches, hath sufficient power from *Christ* to call and ordain its own officers; so that no man or set of men have authority to chuse officers for them, or impose any officers on them, without their previous knowledge and voluntary consent, Acts vi. 3. Deacons are to be chosen by the multitude, Acts xiv. 23. Elders were ordained in every church by election or suffrage of the church; and every particular church, as such, assembled with her proper elders, hath sufficient power to receive members, Acts ii. 41. Romans xiv. 7. And in the exercise of any acts of discipline, such a church being convened with her own officers or elders in the name of *Christ*, may act according to gospel-rule in any case, even to excommunicate such members as are found to be obstinate in disorders, or

heretical in principles, after due admonition ; or such as are guilty of gross and scandalous immoralities in conversation, &c. independent on any other church-power superior to itself, or higher judicatory lodged in any man or any set of men, by any institution of *Christ*: and therefore the elders of a church, meeting in the absence of the members, or convened with the elders of other churches, are not entrusted with a power to act for a church in admission of members, ordination, or censures, &c. and it is the duty of such a church to admonish any of her members or officers, their teacher or pastor, Colossians iv. 17. and exclude any too, when their crimes require, according to the rule of the Gospel.

And such particular congregational churches, constituted and organized according to the mind of *Christ* revealed in the New Testament, are all equal in power and dignity, and we read of no disparity between them, or subordination among them, that should make a difference between the acts of their mutual communion, so as the acts of one church should be acts of authority, and the acts of others should be acts of obedience or subjection, although they may vastly differ in gifts, abilities and usefulness.

Such particular distinct churches, agreeing in gospel-doctrine and practice, may and ought to maintain communion together in many duties, which may tend to the mutual benefit and edification of the whole : and thereby one church that hath plenty of gifts, may and ought, if possible, to supply another that lacketh, Canticles viii. 8. They may have mutual giving and receiving Philippians iv. 15. and mutual translation, recommendation or dismissal of members from one church to another as occasion may require. It is to be noted, that persons called to office are not to be dismissed as officers, but as members ; though another church may call such to the same office again.

By virtue also of such communion, the members of one such church may, where they are known, occasionally partake at the *Lord's* table with a sister-church. Yet

notwithstanding such communion of churches, by voluntary consent and confederation, the officers of one particular church may not act as officers in another church, in any act of government, without a particular call thereunto from the other church where they occasionally come.

It is expedient that particular churches, constituted in the way and manner, and for the ends declared in the former part of this narrative, when they are planted by the providence of *God*, so as they may have opportunity and advantage so to do, should by their mutual agreement appoint proper times and places, to meet by their respective messengers or delegates, to consider of such things as may be for the common benefit of all such churches, for their peace, prosperity, and mutual edification, and what may be for the furtherance of the Gospel, and the interest of *Christ* in the world.

And forasmuch as it falls out many times that particular churches have to do with doubtful and difficult matters, or differences in point of doctrine or administration, like the church of *Antioch* of old, wherein either the churches in general are concerned, or any one church, in their peace, union or edification; or any member or members of a church are injured, in or by any proceeding in censures not agreeable to gospel-rule and order; it is according to the mind of *Christ*, that many churches holding communion together, should meet by their messengers and delegates to consider of, and to give advice in or about such matters in difference; and their sentiments to be reported to all the churches concerned: and such messengers and delegates, convened in the name of *Christ*, by the voluntary consent of the several churches in such mutual communion, may declare and determine of the mind of the *Holy Ghost*, revealed in Scripture, concerning things in difference; and may decree the observation of things that are true and necessary, because revealed and appointed in the Scripture. And the churches will do well to receive, own and observe such determinations, on the evidence and authority of the mind of the *Holy Ghost* in them, as in

Acts xv. 29. Yet such delegates thus assembled, are not intrusted or armed with any coercive power, or any superior jurisdiction over the churches concerned, so as to impose their determinations on them or their officers, under the penalty of excommunication, or the like. See the *Confession*, chap. xxvi. §. 14, 15. See also Dr. *Owen* *On the nature of the gospel church*, chap. xi. and Dr. *Goodwin*, vol. iv. book. v. chap. viii, ix, x, &c. *Of the government of the Churches of Christ*.

THE END.

A

Treatise of Church Discipline,

AND A

DIRECTORY.

Done by Appointment of the PHILADELPHIA BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION.



By SAMUEL JONES, D. D.



Son of Man, shew the house to the house of Israel.

EZEKIEL.

These things have I written, that thou mayest know, how thou
oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God.

PAUL.

Philadelphia :

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1798.

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Entered according to Act of Congress.

Advertisement.

THE Philadelphia Baptist Association, met at Philadelphia October 5th, 1795, judging our former Treatise of Church Discipline to be materially defective, appointed the writer to revise the same, or write a new one against the next association.

At their next meeting, in 1796, he laid before them the reasons why it was not done, which were approved of, and he was requested to prepare it against their next session.

Being met at Lower Dublin, October 3d, 1797, it was read to them, and they appointed a committee of one person from each church to revise it.

The said committee met at Philadelphia, on Wednesday the 13th of December following, and after making some alterations, chiefly verbal, it was agreed it should be printed for the use of the churches.

It will be understood, the writer availed himself of all the help he could derive from such writers on the subject as he had by him, or could find; and he hopes it will appear, he has bestowed some pains to render the work serviceable, both as to comprehensiveness of matter and plainness of manner, so far as the requisite brevity would admit.

He thinks it unnecessary to add any thing farther, save that he would beg leave to impress on the minds of the brethren the few following particulars.

First; That they should be careful in the admission of members. Let there be pretty clear evidence of a work of grace. Slackness, or inattention here, has been the bane of the church, in all ages.

Secondly; Let there be most unremitting attention to maintain strict discipline. The glory of the church, the credit of religion, and the prosperity of Zion, depend, in a high degree, on the circumspect walk of its professors, and the vigilant zeal of all, especially of the officers, for the support of order and gospel discipline.

Thirdly; That the professors of religion should walk together in love and Christian union is of material consideration. Behold how good, says the psalmist, and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity. "See how these Christians love one another," was the observation of the Heathens, respecting the Christians of the first age. What a pity, that the members of the same family, and even children of the same heavenly Father, and who is also the God of peace, should disagree and wrangle like the sons of darkness.

Fourthly; Be very diligent and circumspect in the discharge of the various duties you owe to God, to yourselves, to one another, and to those of the world. Let all have occasion to observe, that you have been with Jesus, and learned of him. Walk worthy, says the apostle, of the vocation wherewith you are called.

I will only add; That you be particularly careful, to maintain and preserve temper, coolness, and impartiality, in your meetings of business. To be rigid, obstinate, partial, passionate, and overbearing, in administering the concerns of the house of God: how unlike the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus! how unworthy of office under their divine Master.

Now, that the knowledge of God may cover the earth, and his saving power prevail among all nations; and that the churches of Christ may shine in purity of doctrine, strictness of discipline, and in the beauty of holiness, is the unfeigned and fervent prayer of, your's in all gospel service.

SAMUEL JONES.

LOWER DUBLIN,

Dec. 26, 1797.

Treatise of Church Discipline,

&c.

CHAPTER I.

Of a Gospel Church.

1. **ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ**, the word in the original for Church, signifies, *to be called out of*; that is, a gospel church consists of such persons, as have been *called* out of a state of nature into a state of grace, *called* with an effectual calling, *called* out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son, or are judged in charity to be so called. Rom. i. 6, 7. viii. 30. 1 Cor. i. 2. Eph. iv. 1. Heb. iii. 1. 2 Tim. i. 9. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

2. The word church sometimes means the whole body of the elect, and is commonly called the catholic, or universal church. Eph. i. 22, 23. v. 23. Col. i. 18, 24. This comprehends those in Heaven, called the church triumphant. Heb. xii. 23. Those on earth, called the church militant. 1 Cor. xii. 28. and those yet to be born.

3. But the church, of which we now treat, means a number of disciples, saints, or believers, that have been baptised, and united together in gospel fellowship, and is called a particular church. "Were baptised," Acts ii. 41. "Tell it unto the church," Matt. xviii. 17. "The church that is in their house," Rom. xvi. 5. "That the church may receive edifying," 1 Cor. xiv. 5. "Churches of the saints," 1 Cor.

xiv. 33. "The churches of Asia," 1 Cor. xvi. 19. "The church that is at Babylon," 1 Pet. v. 13.

4. A particular church is not parochial, as comprehending all of the same parish; nor diocesan, as if one pastor might have several flocks*; nor yet provincial, for there were many churches in Judea, Gal. i. 22. Galatia, 1 Cor. xxvi. 1. Macedonia, 2 Cor. viii. 1. much less national.

5. A number of believers are united together into a particular church, by an act of mutual confederation. "Gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God," 2 Cor. viii. 5.

6. Whether the requisite number should be twelve or thirteen, because our blessed Lord and his disciples, at the first celebration of the Lord's supper, made that number, or whether three will be sufficient, because of the promise in Matt. xviii. 20. may be doubtful: but there ought to be so many, as to answer the end of that holy institution.

7. When such a number is found in any place, they ought to propose among themselves, or others may propose it to them, to be constituted a church.

8. For this purpose it will be necessary to appoint a time and place, when they are to meet fasting. One minister or more should be present to assist, and to preach on the occasion. Acts viii. 14. xi. 22.

9. After a suitable sermon has been preached, the acting minister, being furnished with a list of the names of the candidates, and they standing before him, is to interrogate them; respecting their desire to be constituted a gospel church, their knowledge of, and satisfaction with each other's qualifications, and their purpose and resolution to walk together in church relation, in love to one another, and in obedience to the requirements of Christ in the Gospel, together with such other questions as will involve the leading particulars of a church covenant; and after

* We learn from history, that a church never thrives unless the minister lives among them. The practice of pluralities may suit the minister's pride, and save the pockets of the churches, but starves their souls.

they have given their assent to the whole, the church covenant * is to be read to them, which they are then, or afterwards, to sign, and the minister pronounces them, in the name of the Lord Jesus, a regular gospel church, giving them, or their representative, the right hand of fellowship, and wishing them prosperity in the Lord. If. xlv. 5. Amos iii. 3. Acts xi. 23. 2 Cor. vi. 14. ix. 13.

10. It will be understood, that prayers and singing ought to be introduced in their proper places through the whole, and then a suitable address to the constituted church, with a benediction, will close the solemnity.

11. It is this mutual consent, confederation, and union of persons into one body, as a particular church, that makes that church distinct from any other church, and that makes the members of it members of that church more than of any other. " Onesimus, who is one of you ; Epaphras, who is one of you." Col. iv. 9, 12. " So we, being many, are one body in Christ." Rom. xii. 5.

* THE CHURCH COVENANT.

We, whose names are under written, being desirous to be constituted a church of Jesus Christ, in this place, and having all due knowledge of one another in point of a work of grace on our hearts, religious principles, and moral characters, and being desirous of enjoying the privileges that appertain to the people of God in a church relation, do, in the name of the Lord Jesus, voluntarily and freely give ourselves up to the Lord, and to one another, according to his word, to be one body under one head, jointly to exist and act by the bands and rules of the gospel, and do promise and engage to do all things, by divine assistance, in our different capacities and relations that the Lord has commanded us, and requires of us : particularly to deny ourselves, take up our cross, follow Christ, keep the faith, assemble ourselves together, love the brethren, submit one to another in the Lord, care one for another, bear one another's burdens, endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and, finally, to honour, obey, and maintain them that may have the rule over us in the Lord. This is the Covenant we solemnly enter into, in the fear of God, humbly imploring the Divine assistance and blessing that we may be built up and established to the glory of God, the advancement of the Redeemer's interest, and the comfort and edification of our own souls, through the infinite riches of free grace, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord : and now, to the only wise God, Father,

12. Such particular churches have full power and authority to transact all their own affairs, independent of any other church or churches: such as, to chuse their own officers, receive members, exercise discipline among themselves, exclude members, if need be, and, in general, do every thing that concerns them as a distinct religious corporation. Matt. xviii. 17. 1 Cor. v. — 2 Thes. iii. 6, 14. Acts i. 5, 23. vi. 3. xv. 4. xxi. 22.

13. No church, however, can be independent of Christ, who is the head of the body, and who, while he has committed the executive power to his church, has retained the legislative in his own hands, or rather, has enacted, by himself or his apostles, all the laws that are necessary, and the church must take heed how they execute the same, as they will answer it to their Lord and Master. "One is your Master, even Christ. Hear ye him." Matt. xvii. 5. xxiii. 8. "There is one law giver." James iv. 12.

14. Under the law, every member of the congregation was a member of the church. The church and congregation were then commensurate, but under the Gospel they are distinct from one another. For though the church be in some sense congregational, yet the church and congregation are two distinct things, so that the one word should not be used for the other, as if they were synonymous.

15. A particular church, constituted as above, is said to be a church essential, but not complete, while destitute of officers. These were either extraordinary or ordinary; the first comprehending apostles, prophets, and evangelists; and the other, bishops, * or ministers, or elders, and deacons; to which some add, ruling elders.

Son, and Holy Spirit, be worship, honour, power, glory, dominion, and obedience rendered, now and ever more, Amen.

Done at	in the county of
and state of	on the
day of	in the year of our blessed Lord
and Saviour,	

* See the following page.

* The terms in the New Testament expressive of those, that labour in word and doctrine, are the following:
In the Greek.
Rendered in English.
Applied to

ὑπηρέτης, used 20 times,

{ Officer, 11 ts.
 { Servant, 4
 { Minister, 5

Common Servants, 3
 Civil Officers, 11 ts. Com. Min. or Serv. 2
 Christ's Disciple or Serv. 1 } 6. Paul, 2
 Gos. Min. 1

Διάκονος, 30

{ Minister, 20
 { Servant, 7
 { Deacon, 3

Deacons, 3 times. Gosel Ministers, 12. Satan's Minister, 1. Civil Magistrates, 2. Christ, 2. Apost. 6. Christian, 1. Common Servants, 3.

Λειτουργός, 5

{ Minister, 5

Civil Magist. 1. Angels, 1. Christ, 1. Paul, 1. Epaphroditus, 1.

Πρεβύτερος, 67

{ Elders, 66
 { Old Men, 1

Jewish Elders, 31. Gosel Ministers, 14. Elders in age, 7. Apostles, 3. in Revelations, 12.

Επίσκοπος, 5

{ Bishop, 4
 { Overseer, 1

Christ, 1. Gosel Ministers, 4.

Διδάσκαλος, 58

{ Master, 47
 { Doctor, 1
 { Rabbi, 1

Christ, 52. Jewish Teachers, 3. Gosel Ministers, 7. Paul, 2. John, 1. Common Masters, 3.

Κήρυξ, 3

{ Preacher, 3

Paul, 2. Noah 1.

Κηρυττομενος, 1

{ Preacher,

Gosel Preachers, 1 f.

Οικονόμος, 10

{ Steward, 8
 { Chamberlain, 1
 { Governor, 1

Common Stewards, 7. Apostles, 1. Gosel Ministers, 2.

Ποιμήν, 17

{ Shepherd, 16
 { Pastor, 1

Common Shepherds, 11. Christ, 5. Gosel Ministers, 1.

The Summary of the English, exclusive of Christ and the Apostles will be; Ministers 14, Elders 14, Teachers 7, Bishops 3, Stewards 2, Overseer 1. Pastor 1, Preacher 1. Inclusive of Christ and the Apostles, Ministers 25, Elders 17, Teachers 9, Bishops 4, Stewards 3, Overseer 1, Pastor 1, Preacher 3.

+ If they are called Preachers but once, yet we read of preach, preaching, preached, preacheth, and preacheth, about 140 times, and these imply a Preacher.

encouragement and further improvement, and to obtain the opinion of others concerning his gifts. "Lay hands suddenly on no man," 1 Tim. v. 22.

5. After he has been on trial a longer or shorter time, according to circumstances, the church should proceed to invest him more fully with, and confirm him in, the ministerial office, by ordination.

6. The essence of ordination consists in the call of the church, in their voting in his favour, and designating him by said vote to the ministerial work, which power it was necessary should be lodged somewhere, with a view to maintain order; that no person who deems himself called and qualified for the office, might enter upon it without the approbation of others, and this power was lodged in the church. But nevertheless, it is expedient and necessary, in order to give the designation weight and solemnity, that there should be a public and formal procedure, when we institute a person in the ministerial office, Luke x. 1. Acts xiv. 23. Mark iii. 14.

7. For this purpose, having called one or more ministers to their assistance, and all met fasting, a sermon should be preached suited to the occasion. Then, after seeing the person's licence, and the vote for his ordination, one of the ministers should interrogate him respecting his call of God, his motives, his doctrinal knowledge, his soundness in the faith, and his resolution to persevere with diligence. Having given satisfaction, he is desired to kneel, and the ministers present lay their hands on his head, accompanied with suitable words, and one prays. Then he rises up,

our beloved brother _____, being a man of good moral character, real piety, and sound knowledge of divine things; and having been called to the exercise of his ministerial gifts, whereof we have now had considerable trial, both in private and public; we have judged him worthy; and do therefore hereby licence and authorise him to preach the Gospel wherever he may have a call; not doubting, but that in due time circumstances will lead on to a more full investiture of him in the ministerial office, by ordination. In the mean time, we recommend him to favour and respect, praying the Lord may be with, and abundantly bless him.

Done at our meeting at

and they address him in terms of congratulation, bid him a welcome to take part with them of the holy ministry, and give him the right hand of fellowship. After this a charge is delivered, and prayer, with singing, having been introduced in their proper places through the whole, a benediction closes the solemnity. "With the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, or eldership," 1 Tim. iv. 14. "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting," Acts xiv. 23. "Lay hands suddenly on no man," 1 Tim. v. 22.

8. The ministers ought to give him a certificate of his ordination*.

9. We should now proceed to treat of the duties of the ministerial office. But although a person, in virtue of his ordination, is fully instated in the office, and has a right to discharge every part of it, when called thereto, yet while he remains only a teacher or preacher, and is not connected with any church as their pastor or minister, he can have but little to do besides preaching. It will therefore be proper to defer the consideration of the duties of the pastoral office, until we have treated of his acquiring that title, by means of taking the oversight of some church, which will much enlarge his sphere of action.

* To all people, to whom these presents shall come, the subscribers send greeting.—Being convened at _____ on the _____ of _____ 1789, at the instance of the Baptist church of _____ aforesaid, for the purpose of setting apart, by solemn ordination, the bearer hereof, to the sacred office of the ministry; and being, by sufficient testimonials, fully certified of his moral character, real piety, and sound knowledge in divine things, as well as ministerial gifts and abilities, whereof we had otherwise due knowledge: WE DID THEREFORE, on the said _____ day of _____ in the presence of said church, and a full assembly met, solemnly ordain and set apart, to the said sacred office of the ministry, by imposition of hands, prayer, and other rituals among us in that case in use, the said bearer, our worthy and reverend brother _____ whom we therefore recommend, as such, to favour and respect.

CHAPTER III.

Of Deacons *.

1. **T**HE business of deacons originally, in the church of Jerusalem, was very extensive, for the church consisted of thousands, and had all things common, Acts ii. 41—44. iv. 32. v. 14. But, through a change of circumstances in the church, their work is now brought to a less compass.

2. They are to take charge of the outward concerns of the church, particularly to serve tables, Acts vi. 2, 3. The Lord's Table, 1 Cor. x. 21. that of the poor, and the minister's table. They are therefore to see, that the members of the church contribute to all necessary uses, according to their abilities, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. 2 Cor. ix. 7.

3. Their qualifications are set down in Acts vi. 3. 1 Tim. iii. 8—13.

4. The manner of executing their office is with impartiality or simplicity, cheerfulness, compassion, tenderness, and faithfulness, Rom. xii. 8.

5. They are to be set in the office by ordination, much after the same manner as ministers, Acts vi. 3—6.

6. By the faithful discharge of their office, they purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith, 1 Tim. iii. 13.

* Since the word $\Delta\iota\alpha\kappa\omicron\nu\omicron\varsigma$ is commonly rendered *minister* (as per note, page 11.) and as these officers are not called deacons in Acts vi. it should seem as if the application of Phil. i. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 8, 12. to those officers chiefly rests on tradition.

CHAPTER IV.

Of Ruling Elders.

1. **C**ONCERNING the divine right of the office of ruling elders, there has been considerable doubt and much disputation. We, therefore, had a thought of passing it over in silence; but, on farther consideration, concluded to state briefly the arguments on both sides, then subjoin a few general observations, and so let the churches judge for themselves, and practice as they shall see fit.

2. The scriptures usually adduced to prove the right are the following:

[1.] He that ruleth let him do it with diligence, Rom. 12. 8.

[2.] God has set in the church governments, 1 Cor. xii. 28.

[3.] Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in word and doctrine, 1 Tim. v. 17.

[4.] Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, Heb. xiii. 7, 17.

From the two first scriptures it is argued, that the ruler mentioned must be an officer, because he is mentioned with the other officers, and in contradistinction from them.

And from the last two it is observed, that there must be two kinds of elders, one that rules only, and another who, besides ruling, does also labour in word and doctrine.

3. But it is objected,

[1.] That there is nothing in the two first scriptures but may be accommodated to ministers.

2. That the two last may mean the same officer, i. e. a minister, who is said to be worthy of double honour, especially if he *labours* in his work.

3. There is no description given of the qualifications of persons for the office of ruling elders, as there is of bishops and deacons.

4. There are no directions how they are to be put in the office.

5. It would seem there were no such officers in the church of Ephesus, Acts xx. 19, 28. and of Philippi, Phil. i. 1. nor in those of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. 1 Pet. i. 1. compared with Chap. v. i. ii.

The observations we meant to make are these:

1. It must be confessed there are some appearances in scripture favourable to the office.

2. If there were none it would stand on a footing with some other things left to human prudence.

3. There is the same necessity for the office, as for that of a deacon, namely, to ease the minister of part of his burden.

4. By means of the office, the minister may avoid some hard thoughts and ill-will, which is very desirable.

5. It is of material advantage to a church, to have at least one among them, capable of bringing matters forward, stating them clearly for consideration, summing up the arguments on both sides in order for a vote, and presiding and maintaining order through the whole.

6. All ministers have not a turn or talents for it, in the degree that might be wished.

7. Some that are not ministers have, in a good degree.

8. Appointing such to this service, will not only invite them to come forward by making it their business, but will also give them a more particular right, and enable them to do more good, by cloathing them with a measure of authority.

CHAPTER V.

Of Settling a Minister.

1. **A** PERSON having been regularly ordained a minister of the gospel, as we have seen in Chap. II. he is qualified to become a pastor or minister of any destitute church.

2. This is done in consequence of a call and invitation of some church, and his accepting of the call on the terms proposed, or such as they may agree upon. Calling of him to preach, ordaining of him, and his being even a member of said church, is not sufficient. There ought to be a mutual agreement between him and the church, whereby he becomes theirs, and they his. Col. i. 7.

3. How unanimous the church ought to be in the choice and settlement of a minister, it may be hard to say. On the one hand, a bare, or even a large majority, will not be sufficient, while, on the other hand, an unanimous vote may not always be obtained, and, perhaps, in some cases, may not be absolutely necessary. The more unanimous, however, the better.

4. The congregation also is not to be neglected in this business. For, as their good is to be kept in view, and as part of the support is expected to come from them, it ought to be known, that the person proposed to be settled gives pretty general satisfaction. 1 Tim. iii. 7. 3 John 12.

5. In settling a minister, having appointed a time and place, and invited a council from one or two of the neighbouring churches to assist, and to witness the transaction, one of the ministers, after praying and singing, should preach a suitable sermon. Then he, or another of the council, is to put such questions to the minister to be settled, and to the representative of the church appointed for that purpose, as will draw from each of them promises to fulfil their respective parts of the covenant and agreement between them, upon which he pronounces him, in the

presence of God and of the whole assembly, to be the pastor and overseer of that church, and said church to be his flock and charge. Then the settled minister and representative of the church give each other the right hand of fellowship, with expressions of mutual joy and congratulation.

6. After this a charge should be delivered to the settled minister, Col. iv. 19. and his church; and then, prayer, singing, and a benediction, will close the service.

7. The transactions of the day, and particularly the terms of agreement between the settled minister and the church, should be entered at large on the records of the church.

8. Some may say, that so much formality in the business, with witnesses, is unnecessary, and that a private agreement between the parties is sufficient. But as a public form of marriage is indispensable; so the above is expedient and useful, as might be shewn were it necessary.

9. The duties incumbent on the pastor of a church, are many and great, and blessed is he who is found faithful therein.

10. He is to exercise love, care, tenderness, watchfulness, and diligence, in all the duties of going before, feeding and defending the flock, the sheep and the lambs, the strong, the weak and diseased, John xxi. 15, 17. Acts xx. 29. 1 Pet. v. 2. Jer. iii. 15. He is to preach in season and out of season—attend funerals—administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper*—take the lead in church government—visit the flock—particularly the sick—pray for and with them—catechise the young, and defend the faith: besides the duties of the closet, of the study, and his frequent calls abroad, to visit and supply the destitute, settle differences, attend at ordinations, associations, &c. &c.

“And who is sufficient for these things,” 2 Cor. ii. 16.

* It has been thought by some, that a minister cannot warrantably administer the ordinance of the Lord's supper in or to a church, where he is not a member and settled. But why he may not do it occasionally, as persons are admitted to occasional

CHAPTER VI.

Of dissolving the Connection between a Pastor and his Church.

1. **T**HE connection between a pastor and his church is very binding, not unlike that between man and wife, and, like that, it should not be dissolved for every cause.

2. A manifest and material breach, however, of the contract between them, will justify a separation.

3. To which we may add one cause more; i. e. when variance, disagreement, animosity, and ill-will, take place between them, or between him and many of them, to such a degree as to preclude a rational prospect of his future usefulness among them*.

4. In this case it will not be very material, as to the separation, who may be to blame. Nor will a majority, even a pretty large one, in the minister's favour, make it prudent for him to continue, any more than it would justify his first settlement, among them, Acts 22, 18.

5. As a pastor in such circumstances ought not to stay among them in support of a party, so neither ought he to run away from them, nor yet should they use harsh measures with him: but matters of difference ought to be first accommodated in the best manner they can, that they may part in love so far as may be.

6. For this purpose, it will be necessary to call a council from a neighbouring church or churches, the very same, if they can be had, as were witnesses of the settlement.

communion, where they are not members, it is hard to say, when he has the call of the church to do it. It should seem that the call of the church to an occasional act, must be equivalent to its call to stated acts.

* See Joshua Thomas's *History of the Baptists in Wales*, p. 169.

7. At this meeting, peace and an accommodation of all matters of variance should be laboured after, that the pastor may be dismissed and recommended in as respectful a manner as circumstances will admit, in order that his character may not suffer abroad more than need be, nor his usefulness elsewhere be prevented.

8. Should the church prove refractory, and in their ill-humour, refuse to give the pastor such a character and dismissal as he deserves, the council may and ought to give him, from under their hands, a brief statement of matters in variance, together with their opinion, and such a recommendation as they can answer for to God and their own consciences.

9. If convenient, public worship may close the meeting.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the Duties of Members to their Pastors.

1. **T**HE members of churches owe all their duties in a way of obedience to the will of God revealed in his word.

2. These are to be performed in love to our Lord Jesus Christ, John xiv. 15. who is the great prophet, priest, and king of his church, unto whom all power in heaven and earth is given, Matt. xxviii. 18. our law-giver, Is. xxxiii. 22. the head of his church, Eph. i. 22. and who is to be honoured, John v. 23. and obeyed in all things as God over all, blessed for ever, Rom. ix. 5.

3. All church members, therefore, are under the strictest obligations to do and observe whatsoever Christ has enjoined on them, in particular the duties they owe to their ministers.

4. They ought to pray for them, that God would assist them in and bless their labours, Eph. vi. 19. Col. iv. 3. 1 Thes. v. 25. 2 Thes. iii. 1. Heb. xiii. 18. and that he would support them under all their trials and afflictions, 2 Thes. iii. 2.

5. They ought to obey them in the exercise of every part of their official authority, according to the word, Heb. xiii. 17.

6. They ought to treat them with respect and esteem, 1 Tim. v. 17. 1 Thes. v. 12, 13. Phil. ii. 29. Gal. iv. 15. 3 John ix. 10.

7. They ought to stand by them in their trials, afflictions, and sufferings, 2 Tim. i. 15. iv. 16. 1 Cor. xvi. 10. 1 Tim. v. 19.

8. They ought to contribute towards their maintenance, that they may apply themselves to the extensive duties of their office, Acts vi. 2, 4. See Confession of Faith, chap. xxvii. § 10.

9. Pastors of churches have a divine right to their support, if the church is able to give it without being oppressed, or so far as they are able, than which nothing is more manifest in the New Testament. "For the workman is worthy of his meat," Matt. x. 10. Luke x. 7. "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" 1 Cor. ix. 11. "Do ye not know, that they who minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they who wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? Even so has the Lord ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel," 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14. "Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things," Gal. vi. 6. See 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.

10. These passages of holy writ are so unequivocal and express, that no one can evade their force.

11. Mr. Hooker well observes, that "they, who will not pay their ministers, would not pay any one his due, could they refuse with the same temporal impunity." Every one knows, that those, who will not do justice, farther than the law compels them, are destitute of an honest principle.

12. Nothing but ignorance of his duty, or covetousness and want of principle, or both, can induce to neglect or refuse paying; and a covetous brother should be expelled the church, and kept no company with, 1 Cor. v. 11.

13. When a people neglect their duty in regard to the support of their minister, they are not only wilful neglecters of the divine law, but must otherwise be great losers, both as they forfeit a right to the divine blessing, as also because their minister will be less capable of, and prevented from, serving them to the same advantage, Gal. vi. 6, 7. 2 Cor. ix. 6—8.

14. This support of the minister should not be done in the way of charity, or alms, but as a matter of right; and, if the people are able, it ought to exceed his bare necessity, that he may be able to be exemplary in acts of hospitality, 1 Tim. iii. 2.

15. If any church and congregation are not able to give their minister a comfortable support, but are willing

to do what they can towards it, it will perhaps be duty, at least very commendable, in the minister, to forego a part of his right, rather than leave them, and apply himself to some business to make up their deficiency, 1 Cor. ix. 12.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Duties of Members towards each other.

THE principal of these are the following :

1. Love one another, John xiii. 34, 35. xv. 12, 17. Rom. xii. 9, 10. xiii. 8—10. Gal. v. 15. 1 Pet. i. 22.
2. Avoid every thing that tends to cool love, and make disagreeable impressions, Gal. v. 26. In order to this, they should avoid whispering and backbiting, 2 Cor. xii. 20. Evil speaking and surmising, James iv. 11. 1 Tim. vi. 4. tattling and being busybodies, 1 Tim. v. 13.
3. No one should indulge shyness in himself towards another, but immediately make known to the other his grievance and suspicion : and when he discovers shyness in another, he should inquire after the reason of it, Matt. v. 23, 24. Eph. iv. 26.
4. Bear with one another, Matt. xviii. 21, 22. Rom. xv. 1. Gal. vi. 2.
5. Promote peace and harmony, Eph. iv. 3. Rom. xiv. 19. 1 Thes. v. 13.
6. Advance one another's spiritual benefit and edification, 1 Cor. xiv. 26.
7. Watch over one another for good, and admonish one another, when occasion requires, but in much love and tenderness, Rom. xv. 14. 2 Thes. iii. 15.
8. Exhort and stir up one another to a diligent attendance on the means of grace, Heb. x. 25. Acts ii. 42.
9. Stir up one another to zeal in holy living, and in supporting the gospel.
10. Should not divulge what is done in church meetings, Cant. iv. 12. It is a shame to divulge the secrets of a family, much more those of a church.
11. Relieve the necessities of the poor, Matt. xxv. 40. John xii. 8. Rom. xii. 13. xv. 26. Gal. ii. 10. Deut. xv. 7, 11. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. 1 John iii. 17. There is no good

reason, however, can be given, why a church should refuse the assistance, which the good and wholesome laws of the land offer: But the deacons ought to agree with the overseer of the poor at so much a year, and then find a place near the meeting house, where they will be taken good care of and live comfortably, and if the deacon must give more than he receives from the overseer, let the church make up the difference.

12 The church should also assist such as are not so helpless or needy as to be put on the town, yet may stand in need of assistance at times, especially when some accidents have befallen them.

13. In the last place they should not go to law with one another, if matters can be accommodated in the church, or by reference, 1 Cor. vi. 1—7. It is true, the circumstances of the church being so materially altered now, from what they were in the apostolic day, may be thought to render the reason of the injunction in the above text less forcible; yet the mode of reference is at any time more eligible, not only from prudential considerations, but as being more friendly and kind, and, in some instances, more just. For, although the law always has justice in view, yet justice is not always within its reach, of which a christian should never take advantage against any one, not to say a brother. But by leave of the church, recourse may be had to the civil law.

CHAPTER IX.

Of Admission of Members.

1. **W**E have already observed, p. 10. that every particular church has full power and authority, to transact all its own affairs, for its well being, independent of any other church, or combination of churches.

2. The chief part of church power, exercised under Christ, and according to the rules of the gospel, is versant about four things; the choice of their own officers, the admission of members, governing of them, and finally their exclusion, when they prove unworthy of a place in the house of God. Rom. xiv. 1. Acts ii. 41. 1 Cor. v. 13.

3. Admission is either out of the world, or from other churches.

4. When persons are wrought upon and turned to the Lord, under a real work of conviction and conversion, it will be their duty to offer themselves for baptism, and give themselves members of some gospel church, that may be near them, with whom they may walk in fellowship, and enjoy the privileges of the house of God, appointed for their nourishment and growth in grace. Acts ii. 38. Isaiah xlv. 5. lvi. 6. 2 Cor. viii. 5.

5. To this end, it will be proper for the candidate to acquaint the minister or pastor beforehand of his design, which is commonly done, that the minister, after conversing freely with him, may either encourage or discourage.

6. There is no doubt, but that every gospel minister has a right, in virtue of the commission, to baptize all such meet subjects, as apply to him for baptism, and afterward the church may receive them on the testimony of said minister, or on their giving in their religious experience.

7. But, since the church has a right to obtain full knowledge of the experience, religious principles, and moral conduct of those, that offer themselves for membership;

and forasmuch as it is edifying, and tends to excite and encrease christian fellowship, to hear persons declare what the Lord has done for them, Psalm lxvi. 16. and also, as it may be of use to administer the holy ordinance of Baptism in a more open and public way ; it will be better for persons to be examined in the first instance before the church, either on the day of preparation before communion, or at any other time, and then baptized.

8. The prerequisites for baptism and admission into the church are, godly experience, soundness in the faith, and a regular life.

9. Knowledge of the first will be best obtained, by letting persons declare, in their own way, the gracious dealings of the Lord with them, such questions being put occasionally as will assist and lead them on. 1. Peter iii. 15. The second should be confined to the essentials of religion. Rom. xiv. 1. xv. 7. And we attend to the last, as the necessary fruit, without which, their pretension to religion must be vain. Titus ii. 12, 14. iii. 8.

10. In admitting persons to baptism and then into the church, all precaution should be attended to, and carefulness used, that we open not the doors too wide on the one hand, nor on the other keep them too close. Zech. iv. 10. Matt. xii. 20. Isaiah xxvi. 1—6. Particularly, when they give in their religious experience, seek to discover, whether they have been convinced of righteousness, as well as of sin ; whether they have only felt the power of the law, or have also discovered the glory of the gospel. John xvi. 8.

11. When the church is pretty generally satisfied with the parties' confession and conversation, they are, after being baptized, to be received into the church as members.

12. In doing this, the Minister, after a brief introduction, enquires whether they will watch and be watched over, give and receive admonition and reproof as occasion may require, keep their places in the church, contribute according to their abilities towards all necessary uses, and in all things walk in a professed and willing subjection to the commands and institutions of Christ in the gospel: the

which having promised he gives them the right hand of fellowship, bids them a welcome among the disciples, prays, and gives out a suitable Hymn. 2 Cor. viii. 5. Acts. ii. 41. 2 Cor. vi. 14. Those who practice laying on of hands will know when to introduce it.

13. If the case of the applicant be pretty doubtful, his baptism, and consequently admission, had better be deferred: but this should be done with much tenderness and suitable encouragement, when there are some hopeful appearances.

14. Persons are sometimes admitted from other churches to transient and occasional communion, without transferring their membership, and this may be done without letters of recommendation, when they are known, but not otherwise. Acts xviii. 27. Rom. xvi. 1, 2. Col. iv. 10.

15. When any member's residence is in providence removed to a distance from the church whereof he is a member, and more convenient to attend with another church of the same faith, he ought to apply to the church of which he is a member, for a letter recommendatory and dismissive to the church more contiguous to him, and the church whereof he is a member ought to give him such a letter, if he is in good standing among them, directed to the church to which he is dismissed, and said church ought to receive him, unless they should have good reason to refuse. Rom. xvi. 1. Acts ix. 26, 27. xviii. 27.

16. It is a good general rule, that persons ought to be members of such churches as are nearest to them; for they cannot otherwise so well enjoy the benefit of membership, nor perform the duties, that arise out of church relation.

17. There may be however cases, that will make against this rule, particularly when persons plead greater benefit to themselves, in a church more remote; and they ought to be attended to, provided the other church be not too remote; for edification is the first object of church relation, and their entering into the relation at first was a voluntary act; nor should a church be made a prison of, wherein to confine people against their will.

18. It is certain there can be no dismissal to the world; and it is doubted, whether it would be regular for a church

to dismiss to another church, with which it can hold no communion: but in this case, it may give a few lines signifying the person's character and standing with them.

19. When a person offers, who is a member of a church differing in faith and order, then, satisfaction is to be required touching the points in difference.

CHAPTER X.

Of Church Censures.

1. **C**HURCH censures are properly but two; admonition or rebuke, and excommunication; for suspension in most cases, is rather a delay or postponement of censure.

2. Admonition and rebuke are nearly synonymous. The first is of the nature of advice, entreaty, warning, 1 Cor. x. 11. Acts xxvii. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 15. 1 Tim. v. 1. Tit. iii. 10. The other carries in it more of reprehension, severity, and authority, Levit. xix. 17. Luke xix. 39. 2 Tim. iv. 2. Tit. ii. 15.

3. Admonition or rebuke is either private or public.

4. Private admonition is when the offence, whether against God, or more especially against a particular person, is private and not much known, Rom. xv. 14. Luke xvii. 3.

5. In this case, the offended brother is not to divulge the matter, but to go to the offender, and endeavour in a tender, friendly manner, to convince and reclaim his brother. If he succeeds, and the offending brother shews signs of repentance, and promises amendment, the matter is to end there. But if not, the offended brother is to take one or two of the brethren with him, such as he shall judge most likely to gain on his brother. If this admonition also should take no effect, the matter is to be brought before the church, Matt. xviii. 15—17.

6. This rule holds good, let the offence be of ever so heinous a nature, provided it be private.

7. When it is brought before the church, after the charge is proved, should he deny it, the minister is to admonish, and endeavour in the spirit of meekness to reclaim the offender, 1 Tim. v. 20. Tit. i. 13. Should this prove ineffectual, and the offender continue obstinate and impenitent, the church is to proceed to higher acts of censure,

and, in some cases, if he is penitent, as we shall see in the 16th verse, Matt. xviii. 17.

8. Should any private matter be brought into the church, before the previous steps have been taken, the person that brings it in ought to be severely reprov'd and admonish'd, and that publicly before the church, for his irregular and injurious conduct therein: yet nevertheless, the church must now take it in hand, forasmuch as it will then be no longer private, but will require public satisfaction.

9. Public admonition or rebuke also takes place in regard to public offences, of a less heinous nature, but unseemly in christians, and unworthy of their vocation, Rom. xiv. 22. Matt. v. 22. 1 Cor. viii. 12.

10. Suspension is to be used, when a person, under the first admonition or rebuke in the church, proves incorrigible. For, since there is to be a second admonition, Titus iii. 10. he ought, while we are waiting to see the effect of the first, to be put under suspension, and debarred the privileges of the church, Rev. ii. 21.

11. When a charge is brought into the church against a person, if he denies it, and witnesses are not at hand, or some other circumstances make it inconvenient for the present to discuss the matter, it will be necessary to lay him, in the mean time, under suspension from the Lord's table, until the matter can come to an hearing, Lev. Chapters XIII, XIV.

12. Suspension is also used, when the offence is not sufficiently great, or is not yet ripe for the great sentence of excommunication. Such is not to be accounted as an enemy, but to be exhorted as a brother; in union, though not in communion. 2 Thes. iii. 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15.

13. To the above three cases, wherein suspension is to take place, we may add a fourth, and that is, when a person is called in question for some high misdemeanor, for which he ought to be excommunicated, it is thought, that if there are strong signs of genuine repentance, the infliction of the sentence ought to be dispensed with, yet nevertheless, the guilty person ought to be suspended from communion for a time, as a testimony of the church's indignation against

every species of wickedness, and in vindication of the honour and glory of God. Thus the Lord appointed concerning Miriam, that she should be shut out of the camp seven days, and then received in again, Numb. xii. 14, 15.

14. The last and highest act of church censure is excommunication, to which recourse must be had, when previous censures have not their due effect, in bringing persons dealt with to repentance, provided the matters for which they are under dealing, with the circumstances of aggravation during the course of said dealing, manifestly involve immorality or heresy*.

15. Acts of immorality include not only the particulars of the decalogue, but also the commands, appointments, institutions, and ordinances contained in the New Testament: for a breach of any positive injunction, or requirement of divine authority, must involve in it a breach of morality.

16. There should be care taken, however, not to make forced constructions of implicit immorality, as for instance, to charge a person with transgressing the rule in Heb. x. 25. and breach of covenant, because he neglects his place, attends worship elsewhere, and perhaps with those of a different persuasion, but pleads greater edification, and perhaps, conscience †, least we should act the part of Diotrophes. 3 John x.

17. When a member is found guilty of some gross act of immorality, and which is notorious and scandalous, the church should proceed to this censure in the first place, without the previous steps of admonition and reproof, in order to vindicate the credit of their holy profession, and to manifest their abhorrence of such abomination, 1 Cor. v. 1, 2, 7, 13. 1 Tim. v. 24.

18. Such as are heretical in their principles, denying some essential doctrine, or holding and teaching such as may be unsound and scandalous, come under the notice of this ordinance, Gal. i. 6, 7. compared with Chap. V. 12. 1 Tim. i. 19, 20. vi. 3—5. 2 Tim. ii. 16—18. Rev. ii. 14, 15, 20. 2 Cor. ii. 6.

* It is thought that Matt. xviii. 17. 1 Cor. v. 3, 5. refer not to excommunication.

† See Dr. Owen on the nature of a Gospel Church, p. 109, 225.

19. The charge being sufficiently proved in the opinion of the church, and they having determined on the person's exclusion, and set the time for that purpose, the minister is to lay open the heinousness of the crime, with the aggravating circumstances thereof, and the scandal such an one is become to religion; he is to apply the particular places of scripture, that may be pertinent to the case, in order to charge the offence home on the conscience of the offender, if present, and that others also may fear; he is to open the nature and end of the censure, expressing the solemn sense of himself and church on this awful occasion; and then he is, in the presence of the church, to cut off and seclude such an offender by name from the union and communion of the church, so that he is not, henceforth to be looked upon, deemed or accounted a brother, or a member of such a church, until God shall restore him again by repentance, for which they pray.

20. This exclusion is an authoritative putting of such a person out of the church, to keep it pure, and in order to his being humbled and broken under a sight and sense of his sins, and where there are signs of this he ought to be restored, 2 Cor. ii. 6, 7, 8.

21. When a person about to be excommunicated judges himself aggrieved by party influence or otherwise, he has a right to insist on a council being called from a neighbouring church or churches, and the church ought to agree to it, and allow him the choice of one half of the council.

22. If the church should refuse to call in a council, and cut the person off, or should they do it contrary to the advice of the council, the person aggrieved may lay a statement of his case before the Association, who may appoint a council, and if the church should refuse to admit of a rehearing before said council, or should refuse to abide by the decision of the council, the Association may bring said church under dealing, and, if the church continues obstinate, a neighbouring church may receive the aggrieved person into their communion*.

* See the Confession of Faith, Chap. XXVII. § 15. Also Keach's Glory of a true Church, p. 18.

23. In transacting church business, it is not to be expected that unanimity will always prevail: Some will, at times, be in the minority. These have sometimes taken offence, and declined keeping their places in the church for a while. This is very wrong and irregular. For suppose a church does ever so wrong, yet any individual, after bearing his testimony against it, has done his duty, and cleared his conscience, and ought therefore to keep his place, except in case of material defection from the faith. It has been thought by good men, that our Lord communed with Judas, though he knew at the time what he was.

24. Although a church may refuse a person when he offers for membership, if they have good cause to suspect, that he is not truly religious, yet they have no right to exclude him afterward, upon the like suspicion. They may at first judge in his favour, but cannot afterwards reverse the sentence. Excommunication is only for immorality or heresy. As for their dying away, or seeming to die away in religion, the rule is, "Let them grow together until the harvest," Matt. xiii. 30.

25. There ought to be meetings of business every month, two months, or quarterly, and not do all their business on days of preparation, lest something should happen, that might discompose the minds of some, and so unfit them for the holy communion next day.

26. Every church should keep a book of records, and enter therein all their transactions, that it may at any time afterwards be known, what was done and how it was done.

CHAPTER XI.

Of the Fellowship and Communion of Churches.

1. CHURCHES of the same faith and gospel order, so far as is necessary to communion; as they have all drank into and of one and the same spirit; as they are branches of one and the same body, and hold to one and the same head; and as they have one Lord, one faith, and one baptism: they therefore may, and ought to have and enjoy fellowship and a friendly intercourse together, as occasion may require and opportunity serve, in the discharge of those relative duties, which may tend to the mutual benefit and edification of the whole. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Eph. iv. 5. John xvii. 20—26. To mention a few.

2. They should be ready to assist one another, when required, in difficult cases.

3. Such as have ministerial gifts to spare, should be ready and willing to supply such as may be destitute. Cant. viii. 8.

4. Admit one another's Members, of regular standing, to transient communion, when opportunity may serve.

5. Dismiss and receive members to and from one another.

6. They should assist one another with money, as well as advice, if need be, and in general perform all acts of kindness towards each other, as neighbouring, though distinct families or branches of the one great family and household of faith.

7. And lastly, they have fellowship and communion together, for their mutual benefit, in the social duties of an association.

CHAPTER XII.

Of an Association.

1. **A**N Association consists of delegates, or Messengers from different particular churches, who have agreed to associate together, at stated times, to promote their own interest, and the good of the common cause.

2. This practice is recommended by the reason of things, the spirit of religion, and apostolic practice, Acts xv.

3. The meeting thus of churches by their delegates is of special use ; to gain acquaintance with, and knowledge of one another—to preserve uniformity in faith and practice, Phil. iii. 16.—to detect and discountenance heresies—to curb licentiousness in the wanton abuse of church power—to afford assistance and advice in all difficult cases—to contribute pecuniary aid when necessary—to make appointments of supplies for destitute churches—And every way advance and secure the interest of religion, and strengthen and draw closer the bonds of union and fellowship.

4. Other churches, besides those that enter at the original constitution, may be admitted, on making application, and giving satisfactory evidence in regard to their faith and practice, regular order and good standing.

5. The delegates thus assembled are, properly speaking, only an advisory council. They are not armed with coercive power, to compel the churches to submit to their decisions, nor have they any controul over the acts or doings of the churches. Every church still remains independent.

6. Nevertheless, the associated body may exclude from their connection any church that may act an unworthy part. This our association did some years ago, as also, virtually, last association. Indeed it would be absurd to examine churches at their admission, if afterward they are to be continued in the connection, let their principles and practice be what they may, see Chap. X. ver. 22. vide also Confession of Faith, Chap. XXVII. § 15. Our late discipline, p. 61. Dr. Owen on the nature of a gospel church, p. 254.

7. Let it not be thought, that this power of the association over the churches in connection with it disannuls or destroys the independence of those churches: for if any church of the associated body should become unsound in their principles, or act irregularly and disorderly, and will not do, what may be just and right; such a church will still remain an independent church, though an heterodox and irregular one; but it would be inconsistent and wrong in the association, to suffer such a church to continue among them, since, besides other confederations, they would hereby become partakers of their evil deeds. The association can take nothing from them, but what it gave them. This, in such circumstances, it certainly may and ought to do.

8. From what we have said, as well as from considering, that the union of churches in an association, is a voluntary act, a voluntary union or confederation, like the voluntary confederation of members into a church, it follows that every church stands in the same relation to its association, as a member does to his church, and therefore is examined in the same manner on admission. Hence

9. Complaints may be received by the association, against any church belonging to it, especially when the complaint is brought in by another church. Hence also,

10. The association has a right to call any delinquent church to account, whether for a wanton abuse of its power towards or over any of its members, neglect of attendance at the association, disregard of those things recommended to them, or any material defect in principle or practice; and if satisfactory reasons are not given therefor, nor reformation, then to exclude them.

11. At the first formation of an association, or afterwards, there should be a set of rules, conditions and regulations drawn up, as the ground on which the churches agree to associate together.

12. For the maintenance of good order, the associated body when met, should choose a Moderator, to regulate, and bring forward what is to come before them, and to preside in their deliberations: as also, a Clerk, to take minutes of their proceedings.

THE END.







